The *Relaciones Geográficas* Map of Misquiahuala: Interpretation and Contextualization

Elois E. Caswell

Art History Honors Program

The University of Texas at Austin

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Dr. Julia Guernsey, Ph.D.

Department of Art and Art History

Supervising Professor

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Dr. Ann Johns, Ph.D.

Department of Art and Art History

Supervising Professor

Abstract:

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Supervising professor: Dr. Julia Guernsey

This study situates the *Relaciones Geográficas* map of Misquiahuala (RGM) in its historical, cultural, and aesthetic contexts. The RGM was painted by an indigenous artist in 1579 on a deerskin hide and is the product of Philip II of Spain's attempt to survey New Spain. The map invites considerations of the impact that differing cultures had on the pictorial qualities of artistic production at this time. My study aims to explore the RGM's contextual history, develop interpretations of its composition, imagery, and symbolism, and situate it within the broader social context of 16th century New Spain. The map of Misquiahuala, located in the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas at Austin, is an eloquent example of artistic production that exemplifies stylistic hybridity. It embodies the cultural convergence of the Spanish and indigenous Mesoamericans, and provides the opportunity to engage with questions of authorship, the visible tension of cross-cultural dialogues, artistic exchange, and hybridization.

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Introduction

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Introduction

The following essay analyzes the map of Misquiahuala (RGM) in the Relaciones Geográficas Collection at the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas at Austin (Fig. 1.1). The map of Misquiahuala is a rare example of artistic production but has received little significant scholarly attention. The RGM was painted in 1579 on deerskin hide measuring 77 x 56 centimeters (Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579). In this paper, I will argue that the RGM embodies the cultural convergence of the Spanish and the indigenous Mesoamericans, engaging questions of authorship, the visible tension of cross-cultural dialogue, and artistic exchange and hybridization. The objective in isolating this specific map within the *Relaciones Geográficas* (RG) Collection is to attain further insight into its contextual history and develop educated interpretations of its composition, imagery, and symbolism within its broader social context.

The Spanish conquest of Mesoamerica initiated the widespread convergence of vastly different cultures, with Spanish and Amerindians negotiating for position and autonomy in colonial society. The Spanish, in an attempt to bolster their authority, often tried to eradicate indigenous culture and artistic practices that they saw as idolatrous. The pictorial manuscripts that have survived from this early colonial period provide us with a vivid illustration of how native artists selectively integrated elements of European and indigenous traditions into a diverse new visual vocabulary that enabled them to paint their changing world.

I will begin this discussion by emphasizing the map's function within the broader context of the early colonial period and the requisitioning questionnaire. Chapter two aims to situate the responses to the RG questionnaire and the pinturas, specifically the map of Misquiahuala, in their

contextual framework. Additionally, the RG survey played a significant role in determining what to include on the map. By identifying where we may perceive how the artist conveyed the information requested by Spain, we are able to understand the societal context by which the artist of the RGM worked and lived. Moreover, the circumstances of the RGM's production and its survival today make it a visual and material testament to the collaborative endeavor that the RG questionnaire engendered in towns all over the New World.

Chapter three is a multi-faceted discussion of stylistic and iconographic considerations in the RGM's contextual framework. Throughout the chapter, I will analyze the overarching visual themes engendered by the artist of the RGM. Through my discussion of art production in the sixteenth century, I will extrapolate the significance of the stylized iconography with the interest of gaining insight into the anonymous artist's cultural setting.

The RGM topographically encompasses a region that was a focal point in networks of trade and communication both before and after the conquest. The presence of identifiable cities marked by place-named toponyms and traditional indigenous iconography demonstrate these systems of economic trade and communication. Chapter four aims to interpret and identify the iconography that depicts vegetation, water sources, and early-colonial towns embodied by the illustrative material. My main objective throughout chapter five is to propose the significance of the figural and architectural iconography on the RGM. Throughout my detailed formal analysis of the imagery, I will offer some translations, identifications, and interpretations of its iconographic meaning from the perspective of the anonymous indigenous painter.

It is critical that I acknowledge my own inherent bias as a modern scholar aiming to interpret a visual object generated by a culture situated in a specific period of the past. Throughout this paper, in order to minimize the impact of my personal bias, I strive to stay true

to a historical method that poses many open-ended inquiries, involves a variety of source material, and acknowledges the difference between hard facts and assumed conclusions. Additionally, throughout my paper, I will cite and refer to multiple 16th century sources, such as those authored by Bernardino de Sahagún, which admittedly contain an inherently Spanish bias.

Notes on Terminology

The map of Misquiahuala dates to October 18, 1579, during the early colonial period and is the product of Philip II of Spain's attempt to survey New Spain. The historical conception of this object invites considerations of the impact that these vastly differing cultures had on the pictorial qualities of the pintura. To better appreciate the possible visual and material significance of the map of Misquiahuala as it relates to the general context of the *Relaciones Geográficas* (RG), a note on terminology is required. Exploring language and vocabulary in terms of the effects of the amalgamation of indigenous and European culture is a prevailing and enduring debate for scholars. Examining the evolution of the meaning attached to the words recorded in the responses to the *Relaciones Geográficas* provides insight into how colonialism impacted the rhetorical dialogue used to express ideas.

For example, Spanish officials were charged with the responsibility of redefining native vocabulary to accommodate Spanish notions, such as the conversion of the Nahuatl name of an Aztec ritual called *yolmelahua* to mean the Catholic practice of confession ("Yolmelahua", 2019). However, the discussion on terminology is multifaceted and explores the theoretical implications of employing modern terms without recognizing the bias inherent in contemporary scholarship on historical accounts. A detailed analysis of this complicated topic is outside of the

scope of this project, but for more information on the debate on the evolution of terminology, consult Dean and Leibson (2003).

Additionally, I intend to distinguish the difference between the terms "ideograms," "logograms," and "logosyllables." The terms are relevant in connection with iconography or with the historical motivation behind the choice of sign form (Whittaker, 2012:53). The artist who painted the map of Misquiahuala utilized all three types of decipherable signs. The term "ideogram" is used to describe a sign that stands for a concept or idea (Whittaker, 2012:53). Although the meaning of ideograms is continually changing, typically ideograms are unattached to a specific culture, and the viewer can easily comprehend the image because the visual characteristics directly describe the meaning it possesses. The term "logogram" refers to an image that stands for a word that can be read phonetically. Logograms are distinctly attached to a specific cultural language; their meanings are less malleable and tend to retain their meaning for a considerable amount of time. The term "logosyllable" refers to a simplified logogram that denotes a specific syllable. When logosyllables are combined, they relay a different, more multifaceted, and complex meaning (Tanaka, 2008:38).

It is important to explain how I define the terms I chose to employ. Throughout this chapter, I will use several words or phrases to refer to the rich body of pictorial manuscripts documented by the responses to the RG questionnaire. These include: "pintura," "mapas," and "map." The author of the RG questionnaire refers to the material counterparts of the questionnaire as *pinturas* or "paintings" in Spanish. Therefore, this term embodies the original terminology used to discuss this map. However, many scholars use the Spanish word "mapas," or the English word "map" interchangeably to describe what the paintings delineated. Moreover, the RGM depicts the regions of Atengo, Misquiahuala, and Tezontepec. However, I will refer to

the area and community that the RGM generally represents as “Misquiahuala” to discuss the issues at hand in a concise manner.

Chapter Two:

Contextualizing the *Relaciones Geográficas*

Introduction

The objective of the following chapter is to situate the *Map of Misquiahuala* (RGM) within its socio-historical context. To adequately achieve this aim, I will begin by providing a comprehensive overview of the function of the questionnaire as it pertains to the vast region of New Spain. Accordingly, the first two subchapters focus on the contextualization of the map from the perspective of imperial Spain. By contextualizing the questionnaire that prompted the visual responses, I can derive significance from the specific information requested in terms of its intended function. As the chapter continues, I narrow the scope to underscore the particular map that depicts the region of Misquiahuala and shift the perceptual parameters to the indigenous community. Additionally, I will discuss where the artist of the RGM visually responded to specific details described by the questionnaire. Lastly, I will describe the artist of the RGM in terms of the contextual framework in which he/she lived, as well as postulate the artist’s social status and training.

Contextualizing the *RG* Questionnaire

The mapas of the *Relaciones Geográficas* are the product of the King of Spain, Philip II's, desire to survey the colonies of New Spain in the late sixteenth century. The replies to the questionnaire were named the *Relaciones Geográficas*, meaning the "geographic reports"

because they predominantly address the geography of the New World (Mundy, 1998: 1). King Philip II ruled from 1556 to 1598 and was famous for commissioning large cartography projects throughout the distant territories he inherited from his father, Charles V, who was king of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor. Spain was thriving during the time of Phillip II's reign, and he possessed the capital to finance surveying projects and enlist cartographers (Short, 2017: 24). A similar questionnaire was distributed to local governors in Western Spain around the same time and had supplied a wealth of information about the citizens of Spain. As the nation expanded, Philip II was unable to visit the far-reaching regions of his empire and spent the vast majority of his time in the imperial center (Short, 2017: 152). Under the orders of King Philip II, Juan Lopez de Velasco wrote the *Relaciones Geográficas* questionnaire modeled after the survey conducted in homeland Spain but altered to reflect inquiries uniquely formulated to describe the internal mechanisms and geographic resources of New Spain (Ramos, 2015: 225).

However, the question of why Philip II commissioned such an extensive repertoire of informative reports, on a level unparalleled throughout Europe, arises. Because he was known as a relatively austere and egoistic king by his citizens throughout the homeland of Spain, we cannot attribute his hunger for knowledge to a concern for the welfare of his subjects (Pierson, 1975: 189). King Philip II may have been compelled to amass information about his territories because his empire was the most expansive in the 16th century. Philip II's imperial Spain encompassed a significant amount of the western hemisphere, including what is today the midwestern and the southern United States, Mexico and Central America, the majority of Venezuela, Columbia, Peru, Bolivia, Chile and western portions of Argentina and Brazil (Koenigsberger, 2019). Additionally, Phillip II is known for conquering the Philippine islands in 1521, which he named after himself (Borlaza, 2019). He ruled over territories on every continent

known to the Europeans at the time and led Spain into an era that some scholars dub the Spanish Golden Age. Undoubtedly, King Phillip II was motivated by the disposition that knowledge about the colonies under his command would materialize into power and control over the native inhabitants.

Moreover, the *Relaciones Geográficas* questionnaire acted as a progress report on a royal decree implemented in 1538 by King Charles V called the *Reducción* (Reducción, 2007). The *Reducción* was a colonization initiative that aimed to accomplish three goals in tandem: reorganize space, reconstruct behavior, and redefine language. *Reducción* comes from the Spanish verb *reducir* meaning to reduce or reorder, precisely what the viceroy's officials sought to effect as they departed to consolidate small towns and resettle the populations to larger municipal cities (Mumford, 2012: 1). The Spanish administrators and missionaries instructed the natives in European farming methods, attempted to convert them to Catholicism, reorganizing the physical and intangible spatial parameters and structures. The Spanish officials and missionaries set up municipal towns by relocating the indigenous inhabitants that resided in small villages or the isolated countryside, to a smaller geographic area that was more condensed and thus more convenient to dominate and establish conformation.

Before the Europeans' arrival, Aztec settlements were more spread out. They operated as a network of linked settlements connected by way of established routes of commerce and communication between larger authoritative towns possessing control over smaller subject towns. The ancillary towns were required to supply tribute to the principal towns every 18 days (an Aztec month) (Hernández, 2012: 56). The communities had complex communities that preserved tight internal organizations through traditional methods that facilitated the movement of people, culture, and ideas in addition to cohesive commercial trade. Colonialists took

advantage of the established socio-economic organization by reshaping it to promote and spread Catholicism and European customs and practices. In a pursuit to transform the municipal towns into institutions that adhered to European notions of "civilized," viceroyalty officials demanded the overall reorganization of space that was dominated by a strong sense of hierarchy (Ramos, 2015: 228). For example, a church that towered over the surrounding institutions was built at the center of each municipal town, proclaiming the town's alignment and acceptance of Catholicism (Ramos, 2015: 228). The Spanish administrator's initiative relied on the native elites to embrace the initiative and commute between *Reducción* settlements to promote the crown's objectives, circulate the Christian indoctrination and collect tribute and taxes used to pay the Spanish officials (Ramos, 2015: 227).

Nevertheless, the vast majority of colonists "considered indigenous Americans as radically inferior to themselves" and viewed the established communities as deficient, disorganized, and uncivilized (Mumford, 2012: 3-4). The Spanish viceroyalty founded colonization on the cornerstone of financial and cultural exploitation. The indigenous Americans were governed by a strict regimen mostly ruled by European administrators, and some ruled by indigenous *alcaldes mayores* who were reportedly just as exploitive as the European governors (Alcalde, 2015). Foreseeably, King Philip II was motivated to send out the *RG* survey to gauge the progression of the *Reducción* movement. Philip II's intentions to utilize the *RG* as a progress report on the *Reducción* is indicated by the questions that inquire about the jurisdiction, the intelligence, and customs of the indigenous population, quantify the general population, bishops, friars and governors and the construction of religious and government institutions (Cline, 1964: 365-369). Therefore, the *Relaciones Geográficas* questionnaire undoubtedly aimed to advance

the colonization of New Spain by providing intellectual accounts of the progress that was already underway.

Raymond Craib indicates that Renaissance rulers customarily commissioned documents similar to the *Relaciones Geográficas* to conceive and structure space to establish a "system of taxation, impose a property regime, set the real and symbolic boundaries of sovereignty and nationality, visualize military conquest and expansion, and imagine himself as ruler of it all" (2000: 14). King Philip II likely aimed to accomplish all of these imperialist objectives. The inherent panoptic power of maps imparts to rulers the expertise to establish themselves as an omnipotent authority figure. The knowledge the responses to the questionnaire imparted functioned as valuable instruments to coerce control and envision the ecumenical architecture of the empire. The *RG* pinturas made the new lands comprehensible, provided tangible order, and helped the crown conceive and structure space through visual manifestations of the geography in a developing empire. As a visual counterpart of a larger survey project, the maps helped conceptualize a unified empire and illustrate artistic and symbolic conventions of distant over-sea territories under the contentious king's control.

The *RG Questionnaire*

The initial *Relaciones Geográficas instructions* comprised a fifty-item questionnaire requesting information on a variety of aspects, including colonial life and the geography of Spain's western territories. The colonial leader distributed the *RG* questionnaire to a multitude of towns spanning the regions of Venezuela, Nuevo Reino de Granada, Quito, Peru in South America and Mexico, Michoacan, Guadalajara, Oaxaca, Tlaxcala, Yucatan and Guatemala in New Spain and the Caribbean and Central America (Cline, 1964: 350). Such a vast undertaking

promoted an illusion of control from a distant society. It legitimized and justified Spain's reign over vast and distant territories that the crown had no intention, or capability, of physically visiting.

The RG questionnaire interchanged many hands before reaching the provincial leaders charged with the task of transcribing the textual responses. In 1577, the survey originally arrived in "the central hub of the imperial bureaucracy in Mexico City," formerly known as Tenochtitlan. From there, the viceroyalty leaders distributed it to "the crown's officials in the provinces," who then called upon an interpreter to translate the questions from Spanish to the indigenous language spoken by the community. Next, a native leader, often referred to as "the *casa real* or *alcalde mayor*," described the fifty questions orally to a translator who translated the answers to Spanish as the European official listened and transcribed the responses (Mundy, 2013: 1). Finally, after a colonialist recorded the answers (though frequently items were omitted,) the responses were sent back to Mexico City and then shipped to imperial Spain. I contend that the extensive commute, in addition to the multiple translations and transcriptions that transpired to produce the final responses, is accountable for many of the discrepancies that the provincial documents exhibit when viewed as a comprehensive collection.

As described in Cline's translation of the questionnaire, questions 1-10 were designed for towns with Spanish citizens. Items 11-15 were targeted towards towns with indigenous inhabitants, and questions 16-37 were especially applicable to inland communities whilst questions 38-50 were “designed to report on maritime towns" (Cline, 1964: 347). The questions request detailed descriptions of the cultural history, population numbers, climate, illnesses and medicinal remedies, water sources, the location of precious materials and resources, native flora and fauna, and the construction of religious catholic institutions. However, not all of the

questions were answered by the Spanish officials of the town. For example, the author of the *Relaciones Geográficas* responses pertaining to the region of Misquiahuala and Atengo failed to answer questions 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 36 and 37. Perhaps, the author's decision to omit these answers reflects underlying neglect and indifference towards the level of detail required by the questionnaire.

The pinturas were the configurations in response to question ten. Howard F. Cline is a foundational scholar who studied the *Relaciones Geográficas* and translated the *RG* questionnaire in 1964. Cline's English translation of item ten reads:

> Describe the site and state the situation of said town, if it lies high or low or in a plain, and give a plan or colored painting showing the streets, squares, and other places; mark the monasteries. This can be easily sketched on paper, and shall be done as well as possible. It is to be noted which parts of the town face North and which South. (Cline, 1964: 366)

Question 10 fails to elucidate many of the component features the crown intended for the maps, such as a geometrically accurate plan, European cartographic pictorial conventions, and the specific inclusion of geographic landmarks. The instruction's remarkable vagueness is accountable for the drastically differentiating styles, use of perspective, compositional organization, and visual discourse represented by the ensuing pinturas.

Antonio Sánchez Martínez argues that the *Relaciones Geográficas* were "an ambitious metropolitan project that initially followed specific imperial worldviews and interests but was ultimately redefined by the colony according to colonial worldview and interests" (2014: 1). The "imperial worldviews and interests" Martínez is referring to is Philip II of Spain's desire to obtain this information in an effort to implement greater control over his territories. When Philip II

commissioned the pinturas in the *Relaciones Geográficas*, he expected to receive scientifically accurate depictions drawn in the European cartographic style of his colonial establishments that would collectively comprise an atlas of his territories. The instructional first couple pages of the *RG* questionnaire alludes to the crown's expectations for the construction of the pinturas (Cline, 1964: 363-365). However, the anticipated atlas was never compiled, suggesting that the resulting maps had not met the expectations of Philip II. Perhaps the crown found the wide variations in perspective, scale, technique, and symbolic iconography undecipherable and incompatible to an extent where compiling the maps did not adhere to the king's goal or warrant a better visualization of the expansive kingdom.

Contextualizing the map of Misquiahuala

The RGM and corresponding questionnaire responses were submitted to Spain in 1579, two years after the questionnaire was distributed to the Spanish officials in the region (Fig. 1.1). During these two years, Juan de Padilla, the alcalde mayor of Atengo and Misquiahuala, relayed the answers to the *RG* questionnaire as they relate to the region under his jurisdiction, to the transcriber, friar Señor San Francisco (Acuña, 1984: 29). Therefore, the textual *RGM* response was compiled in a collaborative effort between both an indigenous and European source. Although the indigenous alcalde mayor, Juan de Padilla, reportedly provided the answers, Señor San Francisco wrote them down. He had the ultimate choice of how to word the responses and what to include and exclude. Additionally, the text that corresponds to the map of Misquiahuala is representative of a collaborative effort that counteracts the instructions delineated by the questionnaire that demanded that the first 11 questions be answered exclusively by European governors (Cline, 1964: 362).

The map of Misquiahuala depicts the regions of Tezontepec, Atengo, and Misquiahuala, which encompass the municipal towns of Tecapatepec, Tlacutlapilco, Tezontepec, Tlahuelilpan. Misquiahuala, Tepeitic, and Progreso (*Atengo & Misquiahuala (México),* 1579). Although an unidentified artist painted the map of Misquiahuala, the pictorial conventions and visual discourse imply that an indigenous artist made it. Within Juan de Padilla's answer to question 6, seeking a description of the latitude of the town, is a revealing statement referring to how the pintura was acquired (Cline, 1964: 366). Question 6 refers to the map of Misquiahuala by stating that the native pintura "was remitted to me," suggesting that the mapa was in existence before he wrote his text (Acuña, 1984: 32). However, this simple wording must be interpreted in a reserved manner because, in actuality, it is impossible to definitively determine when the artist painted the map unless future scientific analysis can more closely date the applied pigments.

Additionally, the majority of the mapas in the *RG* collection were painted on European style paper that was provided to the artist by the Spanish officials. However, the map of Misquiahuala was painted on deerskin, a material production harkening back to Pre-Hispanic artistic practices (Mundy, 1996: 65). Therefore, because of the culmination of textual and material evidence, the map of Misquiahuala, at least in part, may be a rare example of a Pre-conquest mapa. However, even if true, the pintura was certainly elaborated by an artist who added the churches that further illustrate the remarkable features of the landscape. Moreover, our interpretations of the imagery are altered when we view the RGM as a result of the *RG* questionnaire versus a map made absent of the function of informing the crown of the community boundaries of their newly conquered territories. Although I must consider the possibility that the RGM post-dates the RG questionnaire, I will argue against this theory in the subsequent chapters, primarily with the support of visual evidence that contradicts assumptions

latent in this conjecture. I will discuss this matter extensively throughout my formal and interpretive analysis of the RGM.

Visual Responses on the map of Misquiahuala

The artist of the map of Misquiahuala represented many of the geographic elements requested by the *RG* questionnaire. For example, questions 4, 19, and 20 request descriptions of the water sources present in the mapped region. These questions inquire about the location, identifying features, accessibility, the potential for prospective irrigation, and how substantial and fruitful the river, lakes, and springs are (Cline, 1964: 365-368). Many of the toponymic symbols that the artists drew on this pintura illustrate the responses to the *RG* questions. For example, item 19 calls for the respondent to reply with a detailed description of the principal rivers that run through the region. The artist alludes to question 19 by painting a river that divides the map of Misquiahuala (Fig. 2.1).

Moreover, question 20 requests a description of the "springs," "lakes," "lagoons," and fountains (Cline, 1964: 368). Because the author of the questionnaire made a point to distinguish the different types of water sources, it is evident that the crown intended specific and detailed accounts of each water resource. However, the Spanish official failed to respond to question 20 in his textual affidavit. Nonetheless, the artist who painted the map marked a significant water source by depicting a Nahuatl logogram, phonetically pronounced as *atl*, signifying water (Fig. 2.2). The logogram is a flower-like image radiating with circular symbols representative of "drops of jade and tiny shells" (Mundy, 1996: 97). The iconographic symbol stems from Pre-Hispanic iconography and is representative of a stream or spring. I will independently discuss why the artist chose to reproduce Pre-Hispanic stylistic channels in a subsequent chapter.

Moreover, question 24 asks for information regarding the native "grains," "seeds," "plants and vegetables" (Cline, 1964: 368). The artist elucidated item 24 with the depiction of trees and cacti surrounding the border as well as flora and fauna situated within the largest toponym in the middle-left edge of the page (Figs. 2.3 and 2.4). Additionally, one of King Philip II's most profound interests regarded the human-made buildings. Questions 31, 32, 34, 35, 36 and 37 inquired about the building materials used for construction, the remarkable "cathedrals," "monasteries," "churches," "covenants of nuns", "fortresses," "hospitals," and "colleges" in the region (Cline, 1964: 369). Philip II's fervent interest in religious establishments signals his profound concern with the developments in terms of the conversion of his subjects to Catholicism. Throughout the composition, the artist rendered five churches (Figs. 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8). Four of the churches are almost identical in form but differ in size. Their identical composition renders them as ideograms for a church rather than depictions of the material architecture of the building portrayed. Their repetitiveness suggests that the native artist of this map intended the audience to read them as symbols for a church rather than visually replicate individual churches. Likewise, the mapmaker rendered the church hill signs, plants, and rivers to describe elements of the land by naming them, not describing them.

Moreover, as symbols for a church, these pictorials serve as representations of the central role of religion within the community. Accordingly, the church's central location and large scale relative to the surrounding pictorials professes the fundamental function of Catholicism in early colonial society. Native artists consistently incorporated Spanish culturally charged images, such as a church, into the Spanish American visual vocabulary. This process reveals that indigenous writing systems continued to adapt and develop throughout the colonial period. Perhaps the artist mimicked the Spanish through the rendering of powerful European iconography with the desire

to acquire some of the power or autonomy of their colonizers (Boornazian, 2005: 303). I will further address the cultivation of stylistic conventions and linguistic constructions that formed a uniquely early colonial period style in the subsequent chapters.

Authorship in Context

The Relaciones Geográficas questionnaire's intended respondents were "viceroyalty officials," local governors who had been appointed by the royal government to oversee large geographically expansive districts (Cline, 1964: 363). The Spanish officials were appointed to govern the new world and instructed to "serve the inhabitants of the community and promote justice and equality to wealthy and poor alike" (Shubert, 2019). We may correlate the extent of resistance generated by the community towards the socio-political changes the Spanish officials implemented with whether the Spanish officials adhered to this mission statement. In most instances, proceedings implemented by the Spanish municipalities did not benefit the indigenous community and alternatively took steps to exploit the land's resourses and native population as well as endeavor to erase the community's cultural heritage. Additionally, the Spanish municipality did not heed the command to promote equality, as evidenced by the immense socio-economic gap between indigenous elite and poor.

On the other hand, the relationships between the Spanish and the indigenous population throughout the New World varied widely in the early colonial period. By 1577, when the viceroy distributed the *RG* questionnaire, the atmosphere had shifted substantially from the early formative years of colonialism. In order to preserve or attain status, the indigenous elite population was required to obey and execute the Spanish political and religious municipality's orders, thereby disseminating the impression of submission and harmony. By the latter half of

the 16th century, although often underscored by tension, the elite indigenous population and Spanish officials harbored mutual respect for one another by way of this disproportionate exchange of power (Endfield, 2011: 110). However, this does not imply that instances of mutiny marked by contention between the exchanging hands of power ceased. The artistic inclusion of Nahuatl imagery and language that carried a potent message of resistance on the RG maps evidences the tension between the indigenous elite and Spanish municipality. I will discuss the symbols of power painted by the artist of the RGM extensively in the subsequent chapters.

The king expected that the local officials produce maps and depict the local geography with geometric accuracy based on a Ptolemaic grid (Craib, 2000: 15-16). The tone, rhetoric, and handwriting suggest these Spanish administrators supplied the answers. However, the iconography and stylistic rhetoric of the majority of the mapas indicate that indigenous painters drew them. In summary, Spanish administrators predominantly supplied the responses to the *RG* questionnaire, but indigenous painters made the majority of the maps. Barbara Mundy presumes that indigenous artists painted 45 of the 69 maps remitted to Spain (1998: 30). Mundy supports this assertion by conducting a detailed visual analysis of the pinturas and identifying the stylistic conventions as either recognizably European or the amalgamation of both indigenous and European hands. While the *Relaciones Geográficas* questionnaire "did instruct local colonial officials to draw on accounts of people knowledgeable about the things of the land," the crown did not envision that indigenous people would reply to the *RG* questionnaire (Mundy, 1998: 23). Alternatively, the *RG* instructions state that "in the towns and cities where the governors, corregidores, or other administrative officials reside they are to write the reports themselves" (Cline, 1964: 363). Therefore, as instructed, the pinturas should have been painted by European

cartographers. Thus, the issue of where and how this misunderstanding originated comes into question.

Although the questionnaire called for the Spanish officials to provide a map, indigenous artists presumably painted the majority of the maps (65%). This discrepancy promotes an investigation and identification of the driving forces that accumulated to generate the resulting manuscript. Foremost, question 10 calls upon colonists to respond with an "en pintura," a broad term meaning painting but colloquially used by colonialists "to describe native pictographic writings" (Mundy, 1998: 58). Therefore, the colonialists likely interpreted the term as they would customarily. Thus, the Spanish officials assumed the questionnaire was requesting a map painted in an indigenous style. Moreover, Spanish administrative and religious officials likely didn't have the expertise to draw the maps themselves or the means to patronize cartographers. As provincial governors of expansive territories, their responsibilities were varied and extensive, which may have deterred the governors from allocating funds to hire a European cartographer as the questionnaire necessitates. Additionally, the local Spanish governors may not have valued the survey's intentional pursuits, thus regarding the crown's specification as burdensome and electing to disregard the command. In either case, commissioning an indigenous artist who resided in their municipality appears to have been a convenient and astute decision.

Ultimately, the result produced by the Spanish officials tasked with replying to the RG questionnaire who either misunderstood or deliberately defied King Philip's objective described by question 10, was the creation of something unique and representative of the synthesis of cultures in New Spain (Martínez, 2014: 76). Thus, the *RG* maps provide rare examples from a period characterized by change and assimilation that warrants and inspires a multifaceted scholarly debate.

The Production of the Pinturas

The crown's ostensible dissatisfaction in the maps painted by the respondents does not indicate that indigenous painters were untrained in European conventions such as illusionism or cartographic techniques. Alternatively, there are numerous identifiably European conventions and techniques colored by the artists of the mapas. I will further elaborate on the merging of stylistic techniques and rhetorical devices on the map of Misquiahuala in the subsequent chapters. By the late 16th-century, native artists were formally trained and proficient in applying European artistic conventions. Although the artists of the maps seemingly failed to depict the territories in the manner that Philip II sought, the pinturas demonstrate the way the indigenous painters of New Spain envisioned their world and yearned to describe their society for the Spanish king. Therefore, the RG mapas are a particularly rich body of pictorial manuscripts that document an influential moment characterized by the blending of artistic modes that reflect a contextually specific cultural convergence.

Indigenous painters were undoubtedly members of the elite-indigenous class. Literary accounts written by European colonists refer to painters as an esteemed profession in the early colonial period as evidentiary support (Mundy, 1998: 65). Moreover, the "local cabildo members" who acted as the city council elected the artists responsible for painting the map. Mundy states that in the "Pre-conquest period, only the children of the elite were trained in the arts of writing and painting" and that this tradition likely continued into the colonial period (Mundy, 1998: 65). The monastic schools were well-organized and segregated. "The children of the commoners" and the "daughters of the elite" were "taught the basic elements of Christian doctrine" (Códice Franciscano 1941: 55). But the elite sons were not only taught the Christian

doctrine, but also how to assist friars, read, write, sing, and paint (Mundy, 1998: 77). Accordingly, the artists of the RG maps were predominately indigenous men born into elite families who were formally educated by a systematic structure established by European officials.

Alternatively, it is important to note that pre-conquest and colonial accounts indicate the existence of female painters (Sahagún 1953-1982, Book 6: 29-30). Moreover, pre-Columbian conceptions of gender identity were in "many ways strikingly different than Western conceptualizations of gender distinction," and there is no unequivocal evidence that the indigenous community had adopted European notions of gender by the latter half of the 16th century. Therefore, the Western propensity to rank the division of labor hierarchically with activities associated with females lower on the totem pole than those of males was not necessarily pertinent to the social and religious beliefs assumed by the indigenous community (Sweely, 1999: 10). Although the artist of the RGM was most likely a male, I cannot unequivocally disprove the contingency that the artist was alternatively a female. Thereby, I will account for the unknown gender of the RGM's unidentified artist by employing gender-inclusive pronouns, such as he/she, when referring to the artist.

The RG maps are an unparalleled collection of visual imagery that reflects the intermingling of artistic traditions that followed in the wake of the conquest. This amalgamation of European and indigenous artistic conventions was undoubtedly kindled by the system of authority and influence that structured the monastic schools. Understanding how the artist schools operated enables us to comprehend the exchange of artistic styles and iconography that produced the multifaceted representations drawn by the artists. Foremost, it is essential to note that the artists commissioned to paint the RG maps were not only familiar with the landscape they were

appointed to illustrate, but also skilled and esteemed artists. When the native-born artists had perfected the "application of ink in straight, well-regulated lines, the techniques for gathering, grinding, mixing, and applying pigments, and the conventions of proper composition," the most talented artists relocated to a municipal town with a superior artist workshop (Mundy, 1998: 77). Thus, this indicates that the artists responsible for the maps were trained in monastic schools headed by friars, who reinforced the tradition of the succession of elite painters by favoring elites' education.

The masterful illustration of precise forms, confident and defined brush strokes, illusionistic perspective, and skillfully applied colors exhibited on many of the RG maps attests to the established practice of training artists in monastic schools. The conventionally European techniques and styles taught in schools in the early colonial period are discernable in the RG map of Santiago Atitlán. Although the artist of the map of Santiago Atitlán is unknown, Robertson argues that it was most likely painted by an indigenous artist who was well versed in European artistic conventions evidenced by the use of techniques perspective and shading to create three-dimensionality and the naturalistic and expressive array of color (Robertson, 1959: 266) (Fig. 2.9).

Although European friars oversaw the training in the artist schools, indigenous painters were charged with the responsibility of directly training and instructing other native painters. Therefore, the artist of the map of Misquiahuala likely studied not only European artistic conventions but also traditionally Aztec artistic traditions. The artist of the RGM substantiates this claim by adhering to a conventionally Nahua compositional arrangement and including pictographic devices that draw upon pre-Hispanic iconography (Mundy, 1996: 92). Mundy argues that "the education carried out in monasteries was in some respects a conduit whereby

native painters taught novices and continued a native painting tradition" (Mundy, 1996: 81). Essentially, we may credit the native painters who taught at monastic schools with the continuation of Pre-Hispanic traditional iconography and symbolic representations.

Chapter Three:

Conceptualizing the Map of Misquiahuala

Introduction

The purpose of the following chapter is to establish the framework and discuss some of the critical conceptual inquiries of the RGM in preparation for my analysis of the imagery in chapters four and five. Throughout this chapter, I will contextualize the RGM in terms of how the indigenous artist perceived his/her environment as well as the function of a pintura. Additionally, I will correlate some of the imagery with our knowledge of pre-Hispanic and early colonial past.

Orientation

The RGM is oriented with the east at the top of the page, the west at the bottom, the north on the left, and the south on the right. I will utilize the map's orientation throughout my formal analysis of the RGM and interpretation of the iconography. However, the modern-day concept of cardinal directions differed drastically from the directional concepts assumed by the indigenous community. The four terrestrial directions and the fifth direction where the Aztecs believed the earthly world converged with the celestial and underworld, form the foundations of Mesoamerican cosmology and religious philosophy. Although the horizontal directions appear to

correspond with European conventions, they differ in function by acting as an integral part of the Aztec worldview, denoting north, south, east, and west, as well as the directions of the universe.

Moreover, the indigenous artist's conception of a map's function differed from emerging Renaissance and modern notions of a map. Instead of the cardinal directions, the user's physical body presumed the map's orienting center. Current and western-style maps demand that the user's "body be static, fixed in space, viewing from one point," thus, "one orientation" (Mundy, 2013: 6). However, the map of Misquiahuala "has no fixed orientation," compelling the viewer to "move around the work, reorienting [themselves] to its features" (Mundy, 2013: 6). Therefore, the artist compressed the three-dimensional features of the landscape onto a flat page so that when the viewer uses the Map of Misquiahuala, "the map itself becomes the central pivot in the encounter" (Mundy, 2013: 11). In other words, in Europe during the Renaissance, maps began to represent the landscape as a mental snapshot from a singular birds-eye perspective. In contrast, the mapping traditions utilized to paint the RGM involve the added perspective and lived experience of the community and the artist.

How the indigenous artist conceived of a map shaped where the artist arranged the map's features. We may perceive this impact by arrangement of some identifiable city-states and landmarks and the configuration of compositional space that deviates from the directional standards assumed by the Spaniards. If judged as a European map, it seems as if the artist painted many of the mountains or cities identified by recognizable place-naming glyphs in the wrong location on the map. For example, the artist may have painted a hill-sign recognized by a glyph as a specific neighboring city-state on the map's northern border when the physical town is geographically located east of Misquiahuala. This disparity does not allude to a mistake made by

the artist, but rather a respective difference in seeing and envisioning the landscape after its translation from the three-dimensional physical world, to a two-dimensional folio.

Comparative paintings from the pre-conquest that project spatial reality onto a flat surface are not in existence today. However, some scholars argue for the existence of pre-Hispanic works comparable to a European map and point to the extensive destruction of visual culture that transpired in the early initiatives of colonialism as the culprit for their absentia, and certain stone sculptures and objects that reference local topography do exist from the pre-conquest era. Such scholars conclude that maps were likely among the countless pre-Hispanic documents destroyed by the Spanish in their attempt to eradicate the continuance of idolatry among the natives. However, the existing accounts substantiate the argument that the distinct manner in which the Nahua conceived of their environment fashioned a comparable object that highlighted more than the topography. It is worth noting that the sixteenth-century Nahuatl language did not possess a word for "map," at least as that term is understood today (Kagan, 2000: 48). Some scholars argue that Nahua and Mixtec artists conceived the idea of representing only geography unattached to history or religion as over-simplistic (Miller, 1991: 145). Furthermore, the types of codices that most closely resemble a map served as "the altepetl's collective memory and generally did so by recording the history of its wars, the calendar of devotions and the tribute owed to its leaders by subject peoples" (Kagan, 2000: 50).

The lack of comparative maps from the pre-conquest period does not suggest that the RGM artist did not comprehend what the crown considered a map. In contrast, it indicates that the artist may have perceived the instructions to only depict the geography as over-simplistic. The dissimilarity between the pre-Hispanic and Spanish conception of a map suggests the artist included extra information to elucidate and further inform the viewer as was traditionally done

before the conquest. Additionally, this alludes to the artist's motivation for inserting representative imagery of the *altepetl's* collective memory, a component regarded as necessary for a topographic illustration in the pre-Hispanic period.

For example, the artist of the RGM refers to the Epiclassic site of Tula, connecting the municipal Misquiahuala to this sacred site. The artist's intention here was perhaps to align the community of Misquiahuala with their historical heritage, thus in part recording their historical narrative. By utilizing traditionally Nahuatl visual rhetorical devices, the artist embeds the map with supplemental information that references the community's historical culture and social and political associations with neighboring *altepetls*.

Understanding Language

The linguistic complexity presented by the RGM qualifies the map as an exceptional source of information vital to discerning sixteenth-century descriptions of urban space. The symbols on the RGM are an indicator of the hybridity of the New World's artistic traditions expressed by the presence of both pictorial glyphs and alphabetic glosses that yield descriptions, clarification, and added meaning. The methodology utilized by the artist of the RGM parallels the system commonly employed on European maps. Like European mapping traditions, the RGM exhibits both pictorial-symbols and decoding alphabetic text to represent the landscape. However, many of the pictorial-symbols painted on the RGM "were used to describe elements of the land, not by depicting them, but by naming them" (Mundy, 1996: 101). Following pre-Hispanic mapping, painting, and writing traditions, we find that the majority of the imagery within the composition is composed of Nahuatl pictographic-writing.

It is essential first to understand how the Nahuatl pictographic-writing system functions before proceeding to interpret the RGM. As described by the linguist Gordon Whittaker, Nahuatl script "consists of a powerful mix of (a) morpheme signs (morphograms), most of which represent words and are, accordingly, known as logograms or word signs and of (b) phonetic signs (phonograms) employed in varying proportions" distributed according to the map-maker's discretion (Whittaker, 2012:139). As a universal standard, logograms are signs used to convey words: a picture of an eagle, *cuauhtzin*, produces the phonetic reading of the entire word, *cuauhtzin*. Although logograms invariably express the same standard phonetic reading, the meaning of a Nahuatl sign is seldom apparent from an interpretive standpoint. "The same sign could be read as a logograph or phonograph or could produce a conventional meaning," thereby, elucidating the Nahuatl language is a difficult undertaking (Mundy, 2015: 139). The meaning imparted by the Nahuatl pictographic-glyphs is elastic. Scribes painted linguistic-signs to express a plethora of meaning. On maps in particular symbols typically marked the past or present existence of a mountain or town, acted as a place-naming device, or characterized the status of the *altepetl*, city-state (Mundy, 1996: 149). The intended meaning of a linguistic-sign was determined by any number of factors. Determinants such as the artist's authority, the environment, the function, and audience of the work, the sociopolitical conditions, likely impacted the artist's chosen method of communication.

The extent of the use of logographic place-names on the RG pinturas indicates that the indigenous artists "held them to be an essential means of representing their communities" and self-identification (Mundy, 1996: 149). The high-magnitude of complexity latent within the framework of Nahuatl logograms and stylistically pre-Columbian imagery demands that I

examine all potential meanings. Therefore, as I aspire to interpret the RGM in the following chapter, I will put forth a discussion of existing interpretations and significance.

Understanding Hill-Signs

Dispersed throughout the composition, and mainly aggregated on the inner edge of the border, are bell-shaped pictographs with curved tops representing *cola*, the Nahuatl term for "something curved" (Mundy, 1996: 87). In Nahuatl traditions, hill-signs such as these typically represent an elevation such as a hill or mountain or identify a city, town, or region. The considerable number of orographic (pertaining to mountains) hill-signs is a testament to the painter's cognizance of the elevated lands that adjoined his/her province. Unlike the vegetal depictions, churches, and figures, the artist employed conventional Aztec painting traditions and logograms to characterize these glyphs. "The distinction between text and image is rarely sharp: in Mesoamerican written works, the text is interspersed with images" and in addition, "the same images that function as pictures (or non-linguistic symbols) can also, in another context, be meant to be words (or linguistic signs)" (Mundy, 1996: 139). Therefore, when retrospectively examining a map like the RGM, it can be tedious or even impossible to discern whether a hill-sign was meant to name a specific place (or landmark, etc.) or rather to encourage the viewer to envision the physical territory.

Fifteen of the hill-signs are adorned with onomastic glyphs suggesting they stood as a homonym for a city. The remaining five hill-signs presumably represent specific elevated land masses. However, prior scholarship has only succeeded in unequivocally associating a few of these place-names with contemporary towns or settlements. I will enlist the existing interpretations of the place-names throughout the following subchapters. However, it is crucial to

note that, at present, we are incapable of wholly deciphering the meaning the artist intended to imbue when he/she articulated the imagery. At the time the artist painted the pintura, the standard for artistic rhetoric was evolving at the same rate as the culture it was conceived in. Because the RGM was painted at a time marked by the hybridity of culture brought on by colonialism, many of the symbols are impossible to interpret and identify.

Additionally, the schematic landscape is littered with hill-signs that vary in size. It is unclear if the variation in scale is proportional to the landmass's size, emphasizes the cultural significance of the landmark it depicts, or is merely a reflection of the artist's hand and his/her vision of the community. Although in most cases it is difficult to assign meaning to the relative size of a hill-sign, it may be assumed that the artist drew the dimensions of each hill-sign in accordance with at least one of these reasons.

Examining the Dotted-Diamond Pattern

Many of the hill-signs are adorned by a netted and dotted pattern found throughout pre-Columbian and early-colonial period art. This pattern was commonly used to represent the woven texture of cloth (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2). Additionally, the diamond-dotted pattern was also used to illustrate the scales of a serpent as seen engraved on the head of the famous monolith depicting *Coatlicue*, the mother-earth goddess (Fig. 3.3). However, this pattern was also used to represent a mountainous region in the *Codex Cozcatzin* and the toponym on the RG *Map of Cempoala* (Figs. 3.4 and 3.5). Rodríguez proposes that this pattern perhaps represents the strength of the mountains (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). However, the more widely accepted interpretation is that the pattern is a visual sign aligning the mountains with the female "earth monster, *Tlaltecuhtli*, whose body has been ripped apart to create a habitable world" (Mundy,

2013: 10). Images of *Tlaltecuhtli* were considered "representations of the earth" that "embody the divinity of the earth itself" (Henderson, 2005: 2). Therefore, by marking the mountains with the imagery associated with *Tlaltecuhtli* the artist expresses the notion of the "eruption of divine force into an image" and an anthropomorphic expression of the Aztec earth into the place-name and hill-signs (López Austín, 1990: 138).

Introducing the RGM Composition

The RGM was painted on a milky white-colored deerskin hide. The practice of painting on animal hides harkens back to pre-Columbian artistic traditions and deviates from the early-colonial period map-making conventions exhibited by the majority of the RG collection. All the other pinturas in the RG collection were painted on European paper aside from the Map of Culhuacán, which was painted on locally produced paper, and the Map of Cuauhtinchan painted on *amatl* (bark paper) (Mundy, 1996: 65; Steinhilper, 2013: 178). Therefore, it is remarkably atypical for the artist of the RGM to have painted on deerskin rather than European paper. In the book *The Mapping of New Spain* (1996), Barbara Mundy argues that this anomaly indicates that the map of Misquiahuala was made before the conquest (65).

Alternatively, I contend that the unconventional material does not indisputably denote that the RGM pre-dates the questionnaire. The traditional practice of producing velum with a smooth surface suitable for the application of paint was passed down by the indigenous artists who taught at the artists schools. Animal hides such as the deer hide used by the RGM artist were used in many colonial records. Therefore, its unconventionality does not indicate that the practice had been abandoned by the community in the 16th century. Many of the RG pinturas were painted on multiple sheets of European paper glued together. For example, the paper used

on RG *map of Cempoala* was adapted by the mapmaker who attached multiple sheets of paper to achieve the size appropriate to the object and composition being presented (Fig. 3.6). The slightly darker surface shows where the artist applied the adhesive to join multiple sheets of Spanish paper. In the article "Mapping Babel" Barbara Mundy noted that "European paper came in set parameters. But rather than having their map conform to the standardized European sheet size, Cempoala's artist(s) made the Spanish paper resemble its indigenous counterpart, piecing sheets together" (Mundy, 2013: 4). In contrast to Spanish paper, the materiality of the vellum allowed the mapmaker to cut and size the material to be the ideal size. In accordance with this, the RGM artist likely perceived this dimensional challenge and thus decided to use the flexible and unsized deerskin hide, rather than cut and glue Spanish paper together. Or perhaps the velum was merely at the artists disposal and thus the choice of material was based on convenience and availability. Regardless, it is evident that the unconventional material is a manifestation of the artists choice rather than an indication that the map pre-dates the questionnaire.

Mundy also utilizes the corresponding colonial period RG text written by Francisco Fernández de Córdova, a scribe who also wrote the alphabetic glosses on the pintura as evidence for her assertion that the map was created before the conquest (Mundy, 1996: 136). Córdova quotes the corregidor Juan de Padilla who provided information about the town. Specifically, Mundy asserts one of Padilla's statements regarding how the RGM was obtained as evidence to support her hypothesis. Mundy claims that Padilla's statement that the RGM "was remitted to me" suggests that it likely existed in the hands of the community before the Relaciónes Geográficas questionnaire arrived in New Spain (GS 6:31 and fn. 6; Mundy, 1996: 65-66). If Mundy's assertion is true, it implies that Córdova added the Spanish glosses throughout the composition after the artist painted the landscape imagery. This alludes to the presumption that

Córdova did not communicate with the indigenous artist when he inscribed the glosses. Considering that the indigenous iconography and many of the glosses have incompatible meanings, this is seemingly a logical conclusion. For example, the gloss at the center-left of the top of the page reads "these hills are of no use," thus indicating that Córdova had no knowledge of what physical elevations or towns the hill signs painted on the eastern border referred to (Mundy, 1996: 137). Córdova's lack of knowledge suggests there was not very much communication between Córdova and the artist before he inscribed the glosses.

However, a lack of communication between the scribe and the painter does not altogether suggest that an expansive period of time separated their contributions. In accordance with the many different people who contributed to compile the entirety of the RG responses, we may presume that the RGM was created through a similar conduit of collaboration. As discussed in Chapter Two, we know that the process by which the textual responses involved a variety or contributors both indigenous and European. Therefore, it is extremely possible that the map interchanged many hands before it "was remitted to" Padilla. As follows, it is likely that after the artist painted the imagery, the map was sent immediately to Córdova who inscribed the glosses, and who then brought it to Padilla to review. Thus, I contend, that it is more likely that the reason for the incompatibility between the glosses and the imagery was due to a language barrier or Córdova's lack of knowledge of pre-Hispanic artistic rhetoric, than due to a significant separation between time and culture that created the final map.

Additionally, the order in which the charcoal text and the remainder of the pigments were applied challenges Mundy's assertion that Córdova inscribed the glosses after the scribe painted the landscape. Without the support of this underlying assertion, Mundy's proposal that the pintura predates the RG questionnaire is weakened. The same thin brushstroke and charcoal

pigment used to inscribe the glosses was applied to intricately embellish and entirely compose elements that conform to indigenous rhetorical devices. Both Córdova and the artist used a quill pen instrument to make these marks, denoted by "the thin, sharp lines made by the edge of the pen's nib" and an iron gall ink "revealed by the rusty brown" (Mundy 2013: 5). In some cases, the presence of the markings used to inscribe the glosses were visibly painted before the colorful paint was applied, indicating that these elements could not have been on the map before the glosses were inscribed.

Throughout the following subchapters, as I provide a visual analysis of the map of Misquiahuala, I will indicate where the markings used to paint the glosses were also used to delineate indigenous forms and the order in which the pigments were applied. Thus, as I describe and interpret the physical and architectural landscape of the city, I will at the same time challenge Mundy's assertion that the RGM was originally painted for an entirely different function than to answer the RG Questionnaire.

Chapter Four:

Formal and Interpretive Analysis of Natural Imagery

Introduction

The following chapter presents a formal analysis of the imagery on the RGM that represents the natural geography and municipalities. Although this chapter's focus is on the hill signs, water sources and towns, I will begin this investigation by discussing the yellow border because I will utilize it as a reference point throughout my discussion of other elements. One of my objectives in this chapter is to correlate some of the imagery with our knowledge of the pre-Hispanic and early colonial past and identify the significance of the drawings that adhere to Pre-

Hispanic pictorial conventions. Throughout my detailed formal analysis of the imagery I will offer some translations, identifications and interpretations of its iconographic meaning.

The Border and Surrounding Vegetation

The artist delineated the border of Misquiahuala in a translucent mustard yellow with a thick brushstroke and rectangular rounded edges. The yellow line is interrupted by three sets of a dynamic series of curved lines in red pigment. Two of these red depictions are located in the northeast corner of the border, and the other in the southwest edge of the border. Like many details on the map, the artist undoubtedly painted the red lines for a communicative purpose. However, the meaning is unknown today, perhaps lost through time and the exchange of visual culture. One possible interpretation is that the wispy red strokes represent an entryway or valley between the surrounding elevation.

Surrounding the outer edge of the border are vegetal depictions of five yellow cacti and trees. It is important to note the significance of trees within pre-Hispanic society. According to Mundy, "across pre-Hispanic central Mexico, people understood that a great world tree (axis Mundi) supported the heavens" (Mundy, 2015: 32). Therefore, the vast extent of trees may be an indication of a reference to this cosmologically tied idea. The border of the RGM contours a relatively large depiction of a tree in the southwest corner of the page. The border's deviation from otherwise straight lines in this area indicates that the artist illustrated the tree before the yellow border line. Four of the five cacti are cross-shaped forms likely inspired by the saguaro cactus, which is composed of a fluted column-like trunk with upward curving arms (Fig. 4.1) (Desert USA, 2019). The other cacti is a tri-petaled form likely inspired by the prickly pear cactus from the Opuntia genus composed of flat pads adjoined by the pointed end of their

teardrop shape (Fig. 4.2) (Desert USA, 2019). The artist painted the trees with red trunks with three branches and yellow asterisks to represent the leaves. These trees are likely representations of mesquite trees due to the red trunks and bristly leaves. I will discuss this attribution in detail in subsequent subchapters. Moreover, the artist would probably have felt inclined to paint the trees that surround the edge of the map as mesquite trees because of the cultural importance of mesquite to the region as the town's designated tribute to Tenochtitlan. I will explore this interpretation further in a later discussion in this chapter.

Colorants and Pigments – the River

The artist painted the river that runs from the southwest to the northeastern frame of the composition with a fluid brush stroke. The river depicted here is the river Tula, which is a tributary of the Moctezuma River and borders the town of Misquiahuala (Fig. 4.3). The river illustration curves organically overlapping the yellow border. Upon close examination of the bottom of the river where it crosses the border perpendicularly, a small mark of the yellow paint from the yellow border is visible as it was applied on top of the river signaling that the artist painted the river before the yellow border. Moreover, because of the manner in which the imagery is arranged, as if dictated by the river, it is likely that the river was painted first before anything else. This is supported by the way that the big hill sign and the small church glyph appear compressed in the negative space as if cradled by the bend in the river. If the river was in fact the first element the artist painted on the RGM, then he/she likely utilized the river as a tool to orientate the map. Additionally, the artist's choice to paint the river first emphasizes the importance of this water source to the community and, reasonably, the belief held by the community that fertile life stems from water.

The most confounding aspect of the river is the unidentified pigment. As seen today, the river is a brownish-green color that was not applied elsewhere on the RGM. However, the original color of the river was most likely a vivid green or blue color that oxidized and changed over time. In a scientific study that identified and classified the colorants applied to six maps in the RG collection, Marry Elizabeth Haude found that a variety of blue colorants were manufactured from plants and many of the colorants identified vary in hue from blue to green (1997: 11). Yet, without a scientific analysis of the pigments applied to the map, we may never know for sure what color the river was at the time it was painted in the sixteenth century.

Moreover, Misquiahuala was and is today a relatively rural area that may not have had access to an extensive array of both New and Old World colorants. It is notable that aside from the river the entirety of the colorants on the RGM are red and yellow hues. This suggests that the region's relative remoteness resulted in the lack of a diverse array of pigments at the artist's disposal. For this reason, the artist likely did not have access to quality green or blue pigments that would remain chemically stable over time. Therefore, I contend that the river's coloration as it appears on the map today is due to the unstable quality of the pigment applied, rather than an indication of a symbolic choice made by the painter.

When comparing the river painted on the RGM to other maps in the RG collection, it is apparent that the river on the Map of Misquiahuala is unusual due to its color and lack of jade disks and shell symbols sprouting from the banks. The river on the Map of Acapistla is an example of a quintessential Aztec representation of a river (Fig. 4.4). When compared to the river on the RGM, it is evident that the artist painted the extremities where the jade disks and shells would typically protrude but neglected to paint the jade circles. However, it is not unheard of for an indigenous artist to render a stream without these symbols. The river depicted by an

indigenous artist on the RG Map of Tecolutla is presented similarly without the traditional elements describing water (Fig. 4.5). Another example that is similarly stylized is the river at the bottom edge of the *Codex Cozcatzin* (fol.10bis-r) that postdates the RGM by a few decades. The artist represented this stream with straight edge borders and waves of blue pigment (Fig. 3.4). This representation of a river suggests the transition to adopting European conventions while nonetheless maintaining a powerful bond to indigenous artistic methods of representing the landscape schematically.

The Misquiahuala Hill-Sign

The most significant act of translation is found in the place-name of Misquiahuala itself, which dominates the pictorial space. Scholars believe that this glyph is a place-name for the town of Misquiahuala due to its large size and the Spanish glosses associated with the glyph. The alphabetic text roughly translates to English as "this is the mountain of Misquiahuala where they have felines, snakes, deer, hares, and rabbits." Córdova likely wrote this to declare the fertility of the high elevation surrounding the semi-arid valley land. The relatively enormous hill-sign simultaneously embodies the town and the mountain Cerro del Elefante as it is amiably referred to by the community today because of its flat top and curved peak that resemble the silhouette of an elephant (Fig. 4.6). The original name of this mountain in the early colonial period is unknown. However, Rodríguez suggests it may have been *Tunititán*, meaning flat top (Rodríguez, 2001: 4). Additionally, this mountain was sacred to the community and associated with ancestors because of the existence of archeological remains dating to a period over 600 years before the RGM was painted (Rodríguez, 2001: 5).

The painter situated the large toponym of Misquiahuala proximate to the northern edge within the yellow border. The artist outlined the large hill-sign with a thin charcoal brown pigment and painted the background pink and yellow. The base of the hill-sign is a vibrant red seat outlined in charcoal brown fringed by yellow as if shelving the imagery within the hill-sign. Protruding from the toponym's base is a comb-shaped form rendered with painterly brush strokes. This configuration imitates a traditional Nahuatl depiction that expresses flowing water in reference to the fertility of the region. An example of a similar representation that follows conventional Nahua artistic devices is found in the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis (*folio 45v). As demonstrated in the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis (*folio 45v), typical imagery related to *atl*, water, is included in blue pigment protruding from the base of the hill-sign (Fig. 4.7). Streams of water emanating from the bottom of a hill-sign were a fundamental element to indicate that the related hill-sign referred to an *altepetl* (city-state), "evoking the origin of the streams at the foundation of Tenochtitlan" (Mundy, 2015: 193). In contrast to the red pigment utilized by the artist in this case, the comparable water symbol was usually colored in green or blue pigment bordered by jade disks and shells. The atypical coloration and absence of iconographic water symbols suggests the artist intended the illustration to have an alternate meaning. Potentially, the artist painted this element in red to represent blood instead of water denoting the mountain's sacred significance.

Within the hill-sign are vegetal representations such as grasses and four different types of cacti that resemble a biznaga, a maguey, a saguaro cactus, and a prickly pear cactus. The artist detailed the plants within the walls of the hill-sign much more extensively than the plants arranged around the border. Additionally, the hill-sign encompasses two iconographic Nahuatl glyphs for *atl* and a small traditional house symbol (*cuau/huahi*). Because the milky white color

of the deer hide is left visible on the *atl* and house glyphs, it is evident that the artist painted the circle, *atl*, house and vegetal symbols encompassed by this toponym before the pink and yellow background.

The Misquiahuala toponyms' central axis is dominated by a red circle, suggesting that it acts as the vital place-naming logogram. This red circle is the most cryptic emblem on the map. The circle can be read phonetically; however, its meaning and how it references the town of Misquiahuala is complicated. The red circle means *yahualla* in Nahuatl, meaning "surrounded by mesquite" (Rodriguez, 2001: 5). Mesquite was undoubtedly crucial to the Misquiahuala region as it acted as the *alteptl's* tribute to Tenochtitlan, as recorded in the Codex Mendoza. The tribute roll on the Codex Mendoza, where Misquiahuala's tribute is first identified as mesquite, shows a bent and flowering mesquite branch. Before the Spanish conquest, each *altepetl* was assigned a tribute item, which they had to provide periodically to the capital Tenochtitlan. The logogram associated with each altepetl's tribute is a place-naming device, re-naming the city. Therefore, in the case of Misquiahuala, the symbol for mesquite was utilized to identify the town on records.

The mesquite tree is a multifunctional tree used to make many different products throughout the pre-Hispanic and post-conquest periods. Before the conquest, mesquite bean pods were a significant staple food. The oldest archeological evidence of the use of mesquite as food dates from 6,500 BCE from the Tehuacan Valley in Oaxaca, Mexico (Matter Of Trust, 2015). Native populations also traditionally used the durable mesquite wood for the construction of architecture, bridges, ceremonial objects, tools, and weapons. After the Spanish's arrival and influence, mesquite lumber was the most coveted wood used to build Spanish boats (Matter Of Trust, 2015). Thereby, I would suggest mesquite lumber was an important commodity to the community in which the artist of the RGM lived.

The modern-day town of Mixquiahuala is located in the Mezquital Valley in Mexico. The Mezquital Valley is a series of small valleys surrounded by high elevations with terrain dominated by mesquite trees (Historia Colonial del Valle del Mezquital, 2016). The forest surrounding Misquiahuala is located within the surrounding elevation, which may have been another reason the artist chose to emphasize the orographic devices throughout the composition. The severity of Aztec laws regarding milling wood demonstrate the importance of lumber within Aztec society as it was safeguarded as the altepetl's tribute. Laws of these sorts are recorded in chapter 46 in the *Historia Chichimeca* of Ixtilxochitl, which tells a story from a king's point of view and is translated as the following:

> On one occasion, while wandering incognito in the vicinity of one of the royal forests, he saw a boy gathering kindling wood in a field, and inquired of him why he did not go to neighboring forest, where he would find plenty. To this, the boy replied, "It was the king's wood, and he would punish him with death if he trespassed there." (Saville, 1925: 4-5)

The stridency of laws that protected the forests used to mill mesquite for tribute, as illustrated by this fable, emphasize the traditional importance of mesquite to the indigenous community who resided in Misquiahuala.

The *yahualo* root of the word directly translates to "to go around something," while the *la* can be interpreted as either "abundance of" or "place of" (Kelly McDonough, personal communication, 2020). The word anatomy poses the question of how this red circle came to be associated with mesquite. To answer this question, I must employ modern research techniques.

Foremost, it is critical to identify the species of mesquite indigenous to the town of Misquiahuala. To do so, I have employed a process of elimination methodology. *Prosopis*

glandulosa, *prosopis pubescens,* and *prosopis juliflora* are the three most common types of mesquite native to Mexico (Figs. 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10). *Prosopis glandulosa* is known for its red bark and ability to grow in dry arid places like Misquiahuala. *Prosopis pubescens* has light brown bark and is usually found in damp soil, thus an unlikely species to be readily grown in the semi-arid region of Misquiahuala. *Prosopis juliflora* has a grayish-green bark and can grow in a variety of soils (Home Stratosphere, 2020). Therefore, if I were to hypothesize what type of mesquite grew in Misquiahuala during the early colonial period, I would conclude that it was either *prosopis glandulosa* or *prosopis juliflora* or both. Moreover, the mesquite trees arranged around the border of the map, which the *yahualla* likely refers to, are rendered with red trunks. The red bark of *prosopis glandulosa* tree supports the argument that the red circular symbol on the map may have derived from a notion related to the red bark or a cross-section of mesquite which is known as the city's tribute as indicated in the Codex Mendoza (Fig. 4.11) (Mundy, 1996: 141).

As additional support that the most readily available species of mesquite in the town is *prosopis glandulosa*, I have utilized Google Street View. When exploring the modern-day city of Misquiahuala on Google Street View, many trees resemble mesquite (Fig. 4.12). The majority of these have reddish-brown bean pods (Fig. 4.13). In contrast to the *prosopis glandulosa* species, both *prosopis pubescens* and *prosopis juliflora* have light brown pea pods. Therefore, it is quite likely that the *prosopis glandulosa* is the most common native mesquite to the town of Misquiahuala.

The coloration of the cross-section of a *prosopis glandulosa* supports my assertion that the red circle logogram depicts a cross-section of a tree trunk from the most common type of mesquite in the region. The cross-section of the *prosopis glandulosa* is a vivid reddish-brown

color (Fig. 4.14). Therefore, I conclude this modern-day investigation of an early colonial period painting tradition by affirming that the red circle at the center of the large hill-sign that is interpreted by scholars to mean “surrounded by mesquite” likely derives from indigenous knowledge of what a cross-section of the red trunk of the *prosopis glandulosa* tree actually looked like.

The Northern Border Hill-Signs

The following three subchapters provide a visual and interpretive analysis of the ancillary hill-signs that encircle the interior of the yellow border. To specify which hill-sign I am referring to, I have divided the analysis into four subchapters based on the location of the signs in reference. It appears the artist arranged these toponyms in groups. The title of the subchapter refers to the directional position of theses groupings. In order to locate which group I am referring to, it is important to remember that the RGM is oriented with the east at the top of the page, the west at the bottom, the north on the left, and the south on the right.

This subchapter, in particular, discusses the three hill-signs that the artist grouped on the vertical edge of the northeast corner of the border. As grouped by the artist, the three hill-signs in question share few similarities aside from their location, place-naming devices, and a lack of "seats" at the bottom of their bell-shaped forms. In contrast to the majority of the smaller hill-signs, the artist did not paint this triad-grouping with the netted-dotted pattern. The absence of this iconographic pattern visually emphasizes the toponym's place-naming devices and thus insinuates that they reference nearby towns, rather than elevations.

Below the large hill-sign of Misquiahuala on the northern edge of the map is a red and yellow shell-shaped hill-sign that differs drastically in stylistic expression. The stylistic contrast

is perhaps an indication of the indigenous artist's transition to adopting European artistic traditions, or a mark of the hybridity of artistic denotations prevalent throughout the RGM. Instead of naming this toponym with a centralized logogram, the atypical shape of the sign functions as a comprehensive pictographic place-naming device. Accordingly, *tecciztli*, the Nahuatl word for conch shell, is at the heart of the toponym's interpretation argued by the existing scholarship. Acuña (1985: 38), in agreement with the corresponding gloss, identifies this shell-shaped toponym as the town *Tecciztlan* that is known today as *Teccíztepec*, an assessment echoed by Rodríguez (Rodríguez, 2001: 5). The toponym takes the unique form of a red conch shell engulfing a yellow hill-sign. The artist detailed the sign with a spiral top and wispy red brush strokes emerging perpendicularly from a solid red centerline. Additionally, the artist painted the yellow portion of the sign with a painterly brushstroke.

At first glance, one may surmise the shell refers to the maritime or a bayside town. It is possible that the glyph represents a maritime town that the Misquiahuala community had a socioeconomic connection to. However, associating the glyph with a seaside town is an unlikely interpretive route because the nearest access to saltwater is directly east of Misquiahuala (500 km), and the artist oriented this glyph northwest of the principle hill-sign. Therefore, it is more likely that the artist utilized the pictographic shell to identify a town phonetically as proposed by scholars. According to Rodríguez's ethnographic study of the region, there is a small town situated between two mountains that calls itself *Teccíztepec*; however, the community elders who still reside in the town did not recall a historical association with a shell toponym (Rodríguez, 2001: 5). Although a historical association is unconfirmed, the determination that the hill-sign refers to *Teccíztepec* is the most credible conclusion purported by existing scholarship.

Flanked by the conch shell hill-sign and another sign is a hill-sign with a yellow background outlined by a dark brown aside from the base. The artist depicted the bird-like glyph in the center with a reddish-pink outline leaving the deerskin material unpainted, indicating that the artist painted the bird glyph before applying the yellow background. The brown outline tapers inwards with a feathery stroke that cuts perpendicular to the outline and partially covers the bird's beak indicating that the hill-sign's outline was painted last. Notably, the dark brown hue and heavy weight of the line used to outline this symbol is different from the thin charcoal lines used to inscribe the glosses. The Nahuatl word *cuauhtzin*, meaning eagle, is the underlying impetus that has led scholars to associate the place-naming glyph with a specific town. Accordingly, the hill-sign likely references the town of *Cuautepec* located north of municipal Misquiahuala (Rodríguez, 2001: 5). Moreover, the way in which the artist arranged this hill-sign adjacent to the northern border supports this assertion.

The symbol on the hill-sign located in the bottom left corner of the composition has an unfamiliar red and brown glyph painted on top of a yellow background. The artist painted the place-naming glyph with a brown stem and red rounded rectangular flower buds fluted by thin translucent brown lines. The artist outlined the hill-sign in a brown color pigment that, like the previously discussed hill-sign, differs from the thin charcoal line used to inscribe the glosses. The outline extends into the interior of the sign with jagged diagonal lines extending at different lengths. Perhaps the artist rendered these interior lines to reflect European conventions of depicting depth or shadow.

The naming glyph in the center of the sign portrays flora or fruit, most likely two red flower buds. According to Acuña, a place-naming glyph with two flower buds, like this one, is customarily employed to denote the municipality of *Xochitepec* (Acuña, 1985: 38). Acuña's

identification of this glyph is supported by the Nahuatl word anatomy *xochitl*, meaning flower, and *tepec*, meaning hill, thereby in its entirety *Xochitepec* meaning "hill of flowers." However, the town of *Xochitepec* is located 240 kilometers from the town of Misquiahuala. Therefore, the place-name most likely alludes to the small town of *Xochitlan* located a few kilometers north of Misquiahuala (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). According to Rodríguez, a community still resides in *Xochitlan*. However, residents have no record of the history of the name or its association with a flower glyph (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). Although a historical linkage is unproven, due to its proximity, the place-name most likely references the small town of *Xochitlan*.

The Western Border Hill-Signs

The three hill signs on the horizontal western border of the map most likely refer to mountains rather than towns. The hill-sign on the left was painted in yellow and outlined and ornamented by thin charcoal lines. The artist detailed this glyph with the iconographic netted-dotted pattern and the Nahuatl term *atl*, meaning water. The *atl* symbol extends from the rounded top of the hill-sign towards the center of the composition. Acuña suggests that this toponym refers to the town of *Amayeltepec*, meaning "mountain of the spring" (Acuña, 1985: 39). However, the municipality *Amayeltepec* is approximately 370 kilometers from Misquiahuala, making it an unlikely place-name for the artist to have chosen to include on the RGM.

Alternatively, a more likely interpretation is that this toponym refers to a series of elevations a few kilometers east of Misquiahuala. It is important to note that the disparity between European and indigenous notions of a map (as discussed in Chapter 3) is actualized here as the nearby mountains that this hill-sign alludes to are located east of Misquiahuala, while the artist oriented the glyph northwest of the principal hill-sign of Misquiahuala. We settle on

interpreting this glyph as the cluster of elevations because their close geographic proximity is a more reliable indicator than the cardinality exhibited by the RGM. To support the assertion that this hill-sign dominated by the *atl* glyph at its center connotes the mountain range to the east, Rodríguez argues that the *atl* symbol indicates that water comes from these mountains rather than acting as a place-naming glyph. Therefore, the hill-sign likely refers to the conjunctive mountain range made up of the mountains Cerro Pilon, Cerro Colorado, Cerro Xithí, and El Llano Largo by which water would flow to conclude the lengthy dry season in the Mezquital Valley (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). The summits of these peaks are blanketed in wooded areas with intermittent springs. According to Rodríguez's ethnographic study of the area, an abundant spring on the Cerro Pilan mountain (indicated on the map by the gloss *manantial ubicado*, which indicates the location of a spring), was known by the indigenous community as a source of fertile life (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). Therefore, this hill sign may refer to Cerro Pilan in particular, thus utilizing the *atl* symbol to convey the location of this famous spring. This argument is supported by the shared watery connotations of the *atl* symbol and the spring, which represented life-giving fertility. Whether the hill-sign in question refers to one or all of these elevations or rather a faraway town, it is crucial to recognize that a centralized glyph does not necessarily denote that a hill-sign refers to a municipality rather than a mountain.

The following two hill-signs express or identify mountains surrounding the Mezquital valley. The lack of place-naming glyphs within the toponym suggests that we may interpret it as a mountain rather than towns. The hill-sign to the right of the hill-sign with the *atl* glyph at its center is one of three other cleft hill-signs. The significance of cleft hills or mountains is a distinguishable mythological feature repeatedly found in Mesoamerican cultures. The idea of

cleft mountains as places of emergence and fertility is an ancient one in Mesoamerica, as Taube (1996) demonstrated.

The artist painted the cleft hill-sign on the western border with a vibrant solid red background and an un-outlined yellow seat. The artist's choice not to associate a place-naming glyph with this hill-sign suggests that it likely was painted to represent a mountain, rather than a city or town. In accordance with its location adjacent to the western border, this glyph refers to two small summits west of the valley of Misquiahuala with an elevation of 2300 meters called Cerro del Tejón (Rodríguez, 2001: 6).

In agreement with its proximity to the western border and river, the hill-sign to the right of the red cleft presumably illustrates a small elevation north of the river of Tula called Cerro de la Cruz (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). On another note, this hill-sign is more symmetrical in shape in comparison to the remainder of the hill-signs. The artist painted the hill-sign on the western border adjacent to the river with a rounded top, pink background, and yellow seat outlined in red. A thick red brushstroke describes the glyph and ornaments the interior of the sign with a more geometric netted-dotted pattern, by which I mean the diamond shapes are less organic and appear as though the artist used a straightedge to draw the lines so that they crossed perpendicularly. Therefore, this hill-sign is differentiated by a more geometric and symmetrical pattern and shape, coupled with its red hue, which dominated the color palette.

South of the river is an unidentified form represented by a half-circle that extends from the borderline. The form has a yellow background with a centripetal volute pattern painted in red. The artist arranged the Nahuatl sign *tetl*, meaning stone adjacent to the unidentified form. The red line blankets both the unidentified semi-circle and the Nahuatl sign for *tetl*. What makes interpreting this form so difficult is that it differs drastically from the hill-signs on the map that

explicitly refer to either towns or nearby elevations. It appears that this depiction references neither wholly European nor pre-Columbian artistic traditions.

Rodríguez proposes that the volute pattern is a representation of an earthquake or shaking and utilizes the Nahuatl word *uiui* meaning shake and the Nahuatl word *tetl* meaning stone to suggest that the unidentified form fashions *huihuitell*, meaning rock that shakes (Rodríguez, 2001: 6). Thereby, Rodríguez claims that the structure represents the mountain Cerro Huitel just south of the river as oriented on the map. Just as in the image, the actual mountain has a long low prolongation towards the south. Being the only known interpretation of this imagery, the identification of this iconography as the elevation Cerro Huitel is important to note, but should not be taken as fact. It is probable that we will never reach an unequivocal deciphering of this glyphic formation.

The multitude of stylistic differences exhibited in this unusual configuration of forms makes identifying it as a mountain questionable. However, the red outline that juts into the center plane of the composition resembles the physical shape of prominent mountain Cerro del Elefante as it is referred to today because of its flat top and curved peak that resembles the silhouette of an elephant (Fig. 4.6). If read as a pictograph, rather than a logogram like the majority of the glyphic symbols on the map, the contemporary community would have likely related the red contour to the nearby Cerro del Elefante. To clarify, "pictography is a form of writing whereby ideas are transmitted through drawing" (Severi, 2019: 313). Thereby, the lines' resemblance to the silhouette of Cerro del Elefante would conjure this direct association. However, despite the resemblance, it is impossible to determine how this symbol was read or interpreted contemporaneously, namely, whether it was intended to be construed as a pictogram, ideogram, or logogram. Alternatively, this configuration may have referred to an entrance between the

elevations surrounding the town, a commonly traveled route, or an unparalleled marker of distance. Because Córdova did not assign an interpretive gloss to this configuration, it suggests the municipality of Misquiahuala did not know or deem it necessary to share the form's meaning.

The Southern and Interior Hill-Signs

Outside the western border of the map is a netted-dotted yellow and charcoal brown hill-sign with a place name glyph at its center that is difficult to discern today. Rodríguez proposes that the place-naming glyph refers to the town of Xicococ, whose name derives from the word *xicotl* meaning big bumblebee of honey (Rodríguez, 2001: 8). After close examination of the place-name glyph, within the context of it referencing a bumblebee, the wings, and striped body ostensibly come into focus. In the *Anales de Cuauhtitlan*, Xicococ is referred to as the setting in a passage that discusses temples dedicated to Quetzalcoatl and constructed for bloodletting rituals (Rodríguez, 2001: 8). Complying with the ritual significance of the town of Xicococ, bloodletting is affiliated with sharp tools used in the ritual, like that of the stinger of a bee.

Within the interior of the border is a rounded hill sign with a dark golden yellow background ornamented by the iconographic netted-dotted pattern. The shape and color palette of this glyph contrast with other hill-signs with similar essential elements- netted dotted pattern, yellow background, brown outline. The color palette is much more saturated than other descriptions, and the shape more rounded and compressed. Like the hill-signs on the northern border, this toponym does not have a base "seat." Perhaps the stylistic differences found here indicate a different artist or that it was painted sometime before or after the other hill-signs. Although this hill sign does not bear an identifying symbol, based on its vicinity to the central church glyph, it likely represents the town of Tlatlauhquitepec, the mountains of Cerro Colorado,

or Cerro Huitel (Rodríguez, 2001: 7). The vague interpretation of this hill-sign indicates that many questions of attribution remain.

The artist painted two remarkably smaller hill-signs, adorned with place-naming glyphs on the interior of the southern border that proximate the southeastern corner. I elected to group these two signs because of their similar size and stylistic approach. Additionally, both are seldom mentioned in the existing scholarship that addresses the RGM. Rodríguez argues that these toponyms either portray the small peaks known today as Cerro Tumba and Cerro de la Virgen or small towns (Rodríguez, 2001: 9). The indigenous community regarded the elevation of Cerro Tumba as especially significant. According to ethnohistorical documents, Cerro Tumba was a focal point of a sacred pilgrimage route concerned with agricultural cycles during the Late Postclassic period (Vivas, 2013: 1). Archeological reports indicate that the top of Cerro Tumba is naturally plateaued, and evidence of two artificial mounds and ceramic figurines associated with water and fertility rites were discovered here (Vivas, 2013: 2). Due to the evidence supporting the significance of Cerro Tumba, the landmarks were likely features that the indigenous artist of the RGM felt compelled to include within his/her description of the landscape. Additionally, Vivas (2013) suggests the hill-signed named by the animal glyph represents Cuintepec; *cuintli,* means "small dog" and *tepec* means "mountain."

The more eastern hill-sign of the two has a solid yellow background place-naming knotted rope symbol. In contrast, the more western small hill sign is adorned by the typical netted pattern without the dots. The artist likely neglected to add the dots on the pattern because of a lack of space within the confines of the small hill-sign. The place naming glyph that names this toponym is either a coyote of a dog. The artist delineated the canine glyph with a charcoal pigment and thin brush stroke. Unlike the majority of the other place-naming glyphs, the canine

symbol was situated outside the hill-sign as if standing atop the bell-shaped logo. The artist may have chosen to arrange the canine atop the hill-sign for a determinative purpose or due to the lack of space in the interior of the toponyms. Regardless, the diminutive size of both hill-signs assuredly alludes to the geographic size or population size of the town or landmark they depict. It is worth noting that the thin charcoal lines that detail and outline these hill-signs and their respected place-names are remarkably similar or the same as the pigment and line weight utilized by Córdova to inscribe the alphabetic glosses. Reasonably, this imagery was likely painted at a date close to the time when Córdova inscribed the glosses. More specifically, Córdova most likely wrote the glosses soon after these glyphs, as evidenced by the last letter of the top row of the adjacent gloss slightly extending to contour to what would have been the already painted knotted rope hill-signs.

Arranged on an invisible plane running parallel to the coyote and knotted rope hill-signs is a small yellow cleft hill-sign. The glyph has a yellow background with the typical netted-dotted design and a red seat. The glyph has no place-naming elements. However, the artist did represent the mountain as a cleft mountain, the importance of which was discussed in the previous subchapter. The Spanish gloss above this hill-sign reads, “here that is *Tecapatepec* two leagues away from Misquiahuala” (Acuña, 1985: 38). There is no documented record of the nearby early-colonial period municipality of Tecapatepec. However, the modern-day city of Tepatepec, Hidalgo, is located approximately 13 kilometers east of Misquiahuala, which would align with the hill sign’s relatively eastern location within the compositional space. If Córdova’s alphabetic gloss was meant to refer to this hill-sign, rather than the relative location of the inscription, the question of why the artist chose to paint the glyph a cleft mountain without a place-name arises.

Alternatively, if we take the interpretive route that the above gloss does not identify the hill-sign at hand, we are able to argue that it is a nearby elevation. According to Rodríguez's ethnographic study of the area, the glyph is geographically located where the elevation (referred to today as) Dos Cerritos (or Dos Cerrillos) exists. Like the glyph depicted by the artist, Dos Cerritos is characterized as a small cleft mountain (Rodríguez, 2001: 9). Because this glyph does not have an identifying Nahuatl element, it is entirely possible that it refers to an elevation as proposed by Rodríguez. However, it is not unprecedented for a hill-sign without a place-naming glyph to refer to a town. A point of interest worth mentioning is the Spanish gloss beneath this glyph that states, "here Jerónimo Lopez was given a small livestock ranch" (Acuña, 1985: 38). I will continue a more in-depth discussion regarding land ownership, as represented by the RGM, in the following chapter.

The Eastern Border Hill-Signs

The artist arranged the cleft hill-sign that bisects the south border within the eastern sector of the compositional space. The cleft sign is covered in the netted-dotted pattern and has a red unidentifiable naming glyph. The artist painted the place-name with rich red pigment. The peak on the right is higher than the other due to its spatial position and the way in which the artist represented the mountain. Based on this hill-sign's location in reference to the nearby estancia, Rodríguez argues that it portrays either Cerro Dos Peña, a mountain known for its red soil, or Cerro Luma Larga (Rodríguez, 2001: 8). However, Vivas claims it is the Cerro Ponzha, where there was a temple dedicated to Huitzilopochtli (Vivas, 2013: 2). These diverging interpretations exhibit how difficult it is to identify what landmarks the imagery alludes to, especially when the place-naming logogram is unidentifiable.

The yellow border encompasses the small hill-sign with an elongated top in the southeastern corner of the composition. The artist ornamented the background of this symbol with the typical netted pattern; however, he/she did not paint the dots within the diamond shapes. As mentioned in my discussion of the coyote hill-sign, the lack of dots is likely a reflection of the artist's hand confined to a small compositional space within the hill-sign. This place-naming glyph inserted into this hill-sign is a red heart, referred to as *yolia* or *yollotl* in the Nahuatl language. Symbols rendered similarly to this heart often reference a sacrificed heart, thus instilling the landmark to which the symbol refers, with a ritualistic and sacred connotation.

Scholars have extensively studied Pre-hispanic ritualistic human sacrifice. Aztec human sacrifice was conducted for a variety of reasons regarded by the community as critical to the populace's survival and prosperity. Although sacrifice is not a focus of this study, it is important to discuss sacrificial practices to argue that the heart of the RGM alludes to this ritual. In short, Aztec sacrifice was "the ritual killing of the deity or the alimentary sacrifice to nourish the gods" that was believed to appease the deity who spared them from suffering (Graulich, 2000: 354). Accounts of human sacrifice are found in many codices and artworks made and written by indigenous artists. However, many scholars argue that the records of the number of people sacrificed and the brutality of the depictions were likely exaggerated to make the Aztecs seem more savage than they actually were. Therefore, the number of humans actually sacrificed by the Aztecs is unknown.

Moreover, a page from the Codex Mendoza (1540) depicts a human sacrificial ritual on top of a temple (Fig. 4.15). Although humans were put to death in a variety of manners, the depiction here exhibits an exertion of the heart. Like the heart imagery on the RGM, the heart on the Codex Mendoza page has three bumps at the top that refer to the superior vena cava, the

aorta and the pulmonary artery. Additionally, both hearts are divided by a band painted in a different color than the remainder of the heart. This band represents the division between the upper atriums and lower ventricles. The preciseness of the ichnographically Nahua depiction of a heart alludes to the Aztec's advanced anatomical knowledge of the heart. Bendersky (1997) argues that the degree of anatomic definition depictions like the heart on the RGM "reflects information gained from observation during sacrificial extraction of the human heart" (355-356). Regardless of the way in which the Aztec's attained their knowledge, it is evident that their knowledge of human anatomy was far superior than the Europeans in the 16th century. The earliest known example of an anatomically defined human heart is an Olmec effigy made 2,500 years before a comparable depiction was drawn by a European (Fig. 4.16) (Bendersky, 1997: 349). Additionally, evidence that Aztec physicians understood the circulatory system long before the Europeans is described by the detailed and specific Nahuatl vocabulary that identified virtually all of the organs that modern scientists recognize today (Weatherford, 2010: 188). Moreover, contemporary accounts suggest that the Spanish conquistadores recognized Aztec physicians' advanced knowledge of medicine and preferred to solicit their help instead of the Spanish doctors who accompanied the Spaniards to the New World (del Castillo, 1982).

The hill-sign to the left of the sign named by a heart is identified by a *coatl*, meaning snake, an onomastic glyph. Like all of the hill-signs arranged parallel to the eastern horizontal borderline, the snake hill-sign has a yellow background with the iconographic netted-dotted pattern. The snake naming glyph situated within the walls of the toponym is painted in black and represents a cartoon-ish style snake with an underbelly conveyed by repetitive lines. As a significant symbol in Aztec culture, serpents were frequently produced and portrayed in a diverse variety of stylizations. The serpent sculptures marking the Templo Mayor as Coatepec in the

capital city Tenochtitlan are characteristically similar to the serpent painted on the RGM. The respective artists of the serpents rendered the Nahuatl pictograph for Coatepec with similar iconographic elements. Both were portrayed with mouths, nostrils, large round eyes with pupils, and curved textured bodies.

Although Acuña identifies the serpent hill-sign as the place-name for the city Coatepec, it is important to take into account that snakes were frequently depicted to denote a connection with the deity rather than reference the city (Acuña, 1985: 38). In the interest of attaining a comprehensive understanding of why an artist may have chosen to associate a hill-sign with the deity Coatepec, it is critical to discuss Coatepec's mythology. The story is recorded in the Florentine Codex and is summarized by the following:

> A woman named Coatlicue was sweeping at a sacred place called Coatepec when she placed an errant ball of feathers for safekeeping in her dress, only to find herself impregnated. This miraculous conception infuriated her daughter, Coyolxauhqui, and her sons for the dishonor it brought; Coyolxauhqui incited her brothers to murder their pregnant mother. But one of them slipped away to give warning to the unborn child. When angry siblings charged up the hill of Coatepec, Huitzilopochtli burst forth, fully armed and dressed in war costume, from the body of his mother, Coatlicue, and proceeded to slay his wrathful half-siblings. (Mundy, 2015: 29)

Therefore, the artist's goal in summoning the snake iconography, in this case, may have been to allude to this story and align the physical mountain with the main pyramid at Tenochtitlan, Coatepec, or "serpent hill" (Mundy, 2015: 26). According to Mundy (2015), mountains were often conceived as larger versions of a sacred pyramid, instilled with potent mythology as products of nature (Mundy, 2015: 25-26). Based on Rodríguez's ethnographic approach to

identifying the symbols, this hill sign represents a mountain called Viborillas (Rodríguez, 2001: 9). Regardless of what elevation the hill-sign refers to, the artist intended to emphasize its spiritual significance, perhaps as a traditional site for rituals dedicated to Coatlicue.

The remainder of this chapter discusses the four most northern ancillary hill-signs that the artist depicted parallel to the horizontal borderline. I will begin with the most southern hill-sign within the grouping. Like all of the hill-signs addressed within this subchapter, the artist painted this hill-sign with the traditional netted-dotted pattern, yellow background, and a red seat. The hill-sign has a *cuzcatl*, meaning necklace place-name at its center that consists of yellow beads and a red string. The center bead is an oval shape flanked by two identical circular beads.

Interestingly, the meaning of the Nahuatl word *cuzcatl* was transfigured to refer to a Catholic rosary (Rodríguez, 2001: 9). The Spanish colonists often converted the meaning of words, such as this, especially those with significance to indigenous communities, to embody meaning with importance for Catholicism. On another note, the Nahuatl pictogram *cuzcatl* likely refers to the eastern town Cuzcatepec, meaning "mountain of the precious stone necklace" (Acuña, 1985: 38). A small population still resides in Cuzcatepec today and call themselves El Rosario, in reference to the root word of the original name's conversion to mean a rosary (Rodríguez, 2001: 9). Additionally, an even smaller population resides today in the neighboring town of Quemtha, meaning “bead” (Rodríguez, 2001: 9).

The hill-sign adjacent to the *cuzcatl* sign contains the place-naming glyph for *tecpatl*, meaning flint or knife. The *tecpatl* glyph consists of a conventional rounded diamond shape (surfboard shape) with a diagonal line intersecting the center in red, leaving the deer-hide background to color the interior of the symbol. Acuña identifies this hill-sign as a place-name for Tecpatepec, a nearby eastern town that was often described by the logogram for *tecpatl*. Not only

did the artist of the RGM orient the toponym east of the principal toponym for Misquiahuala adhering to the town's geographic location, but the artist also described the water source to the north in geographic accuracy. North of the town of Tecpatepec (which is still in existence today) is a cluster of springs, as depicted by the artist with the adjacent spring glyph (Rodríguez, 2001: 10). I will explore the significance of the spring iconography displayed here in the following subchapter.

The hill-sign identified by the red circle place-naming glyph is most remarkably similar to the central place-naming device used to denote the largest hill-sign as the town of Misquiahuala as discussed previously. Acuña comments on the red circle by stating that it is an "unidentified glyph" (Acuña, 1985: 39). However, the similarity between the red circle that marks the interior of the glyph in question and the hill-sign of Misquiahuala is striking. Therefore, I argue that the artist rendered a miniature version of the red circle glyph to explicitly connect the significance of the elevation to the community who resided in the town of Misquiahuala. As discussed previously, the red circle is Nahuatl for *yahualla*, meaning "surrounded by mesquite" (Rodriguez 2001: 5). In the case of the red circle on the large hill-sign this glyph identifies the image as the town of Misquiahuala. However, the same meaning is unlikely as the artist would not have marked the principal municipality in two locations. Perhaps the red circle here suggests that the town is a sub-sector of Misquiahuala or an old settlement of Misquiahuala inhabitants. Alternatively, the glyph could convey *yahualla* in a more literal sense, namely, referring to the characteristic of the landscape in terms of the prevalence of mesquite trees. Alternatively, the prominent interpretation of this hill-sign based on the glyph's location and proximity to other identifiable markers is that it represents Cerro Peña Colorado (Rodríguez, 2001: 10).

The most northern hill-sign situated on the interior of the eastern border is covered in the iconographic netted-dotted pattern with the place-naming glyph arranged on top of the toponym. The artist drew the place-naming glyph with dark brown pigment in a haphazard manner drawn as four vertical lines flanked by horizontal lines that altogether resemble a bundle of sticks or straw. Rodriguez (2001: 10) refers to the place-naming glyph as "*varasatadas*" meaning bundles of canes or reeds. Acuña asserts that the hill-sign relates to the town of Tlacotlapiltepec, today called Tlacotlapilco located north of Misquiahuala (Acuña, 1985: 39).

Springs, Stones, and Unidentified Glyphs

The symbol parallel to the eastern border and flanked by the *tecpatl* hill-sign and the red circle toponym represents a spring. Mundy (1996: 97) noted that "The artist used the indigenous convention to represent the spring; it radiates with symbols of standing for drops of jade and tiny shells, conventions drawn from pre-Hispanic iconography". The artist painted the background of the spring in a translucent yellow pigment and rendered the whirlpool-like outline in red. The artist drew the iconographic jade and shells that radiate from the extremities in the same charcoal brown pigment used by Córdova to inscribe the glosses.

Moreover, throughout the composition, the artist painted three traditional Nahuatl glyphs for *tetl*, meaning stone. The artist painted this glyph in red with a stripe at its center outlined in black but lacking interior coloration so that the milky-colored background is visible. These stone glyphs take the form of three humped symbols. Two of the stones intersect the yellow border and have the humps on both sides, and one is located adjacent to the border with humps on only one side. The artist painted the stones that bisect the yellow border before the border itself. This is evidenced by the fact that the yellow paint is not visible in the area of the unpainted stripe. The

exact meaning the artist intended to denote is unclear. However, it most probably refers to a geological landmark of lesser size than a mountain.

Lastly, the artist painted two unidentifiable glyphs that bisect the border. One of these unidentified glyphs was painted in the southwestern edge of the border and resembles a budding flower. The Spanish gloss associated with this glyph states, "here is *Tula*, one league from *Atengo*. It lies on flat ground, next to the river. One reaches it by bridge." This suggests that this glyph functions as a non-physical marker to indicate the distance of the area. Therefore, this glyph marks the distance as a league from the critical and sacred Epiclassic period site of Tula (Acuña, 1985: 38).

The artist painted the other glyph on the southern edge of the border with a light-yellow center framed by a red petal-like contour. Similarly, the gloss associated with it can be translated to mean "this is two leagues away from Misquiahuala. Flatland" (Acuña, 1985: 38). Therefore, one can assume that Córdova interpreted the glyph correctly, suggesting this glyph also acted as a marker of distance. The artist painted the detail and outline on both these unidentified glyphs with thin charcoal lines that resemble the lines Córdova used to inscribe the Spanish glosses. This likely indicates that these symbols were painted near the time that the glosses were inscribed. Like the stone glyphs, because there are no vestiges of the yellow border, I am able to conclude that they were painted before the border.

Conclusion

The RGM is a detailed account of the natural geography territorial provinces of the region. It is evident that the RGM artist payed careful attention to elevation that surrounded the town of Misquiahuala. Moreover, the many identifiable towns represented on the pintura allude

to the artist's admirable knowledge of the towns that were a proximate and/or had an important social, economic, and historical significance to the region and populace of sixteenth century Misquiahuala. The painter depicted the elevations, water sources and towns on the map in a style that predominantly refers to conventional Pre-Hispanic artistic devises and Nahuatl pictography. As discussed in Chapter two, the artist was undoubtedly trained and skilled in the artistic conventions that one might deem European. Thereby the artist's decision to represent the landscape in a style that reflects his/her indigenous heritage, alludes to the artist's intent.

Determining the artists intend is difficult when the imagery is observed as a whole. However, as I have shown throughout this chapter, we can assume that the underlying significance as it is related to cultural and religious significance of the imagery may have prompted the artist to choose to illustrate the imagery in this way. I contend that the powerful symbolism and associations imbued within the iconography was a driving factor that compelled the artist. In other words, I conclude that the artist believed that the traditionally Aztec iconography he/she utilized better elucidated the landscape than merely illustrating the landscape naturalistically might have. Thereby the artist instilled imagery with underlying cultural and historical significance to signify Misquiahuala's collective memory.

Moreover, throughout this chapter I have supported one of my central overarching arguments that I introduced in chapter three. Namely, I have disputed Mundy's proposal that the RGM was an extant map in existence in the hands of the community before the conquest throughout my visual analysis of the natural imagery (Mundy, 1996: 65-66). My emphasis on where the same line weight and pigment (made using a quill pen and iron gall ink) on the glosses also compose the elements that conform to indigenous rhetorical devices, evidences my

refutation (Mundy 2013: 5). I will continue to underscore this concurrence throughout the following chapter as I discuss the remainder of the imagery painted by the indigenous artist.

Chapter Five:

Formal and Interpretive Analysis of Architecture and Figures

Introduction: Rulers and Churches

The following chapter analyzes and describes the architectural and figural imagery on the RGM. The juxtaposition between conventional indigenous modes of artistic rhetoric and Spanish imperial subject matter highlights the territorial, religious, and political convergence that defined the early-colonial period. Foremost, the objective of the following section is to broadly identify and detail commonalities between the seated figures and their affiliated churches and discuss their significance. I will begin this discussion by describing the architectural elements and figures with a slight emphasis on the ancillary churches, and then turn to the figures and principal churches in detail in the following subchapter.

The artist painted three principal churches, a small church, and a traditional palm thatched house to represent the various architectural styles characteristic of the colonial period. The artist utilized the same charcoal pigment and thin line to paint these churches that Córdova used to inscribe the Spanish glosses. This commonality indicates that the artist likely drew the architecture soon before Córdova inscribed the alphabetic glosses, thereby the architectural elements were painted after the filled-in colorful imagery.

The glosses designate the traditional structure adjacent to the Tula river as the "small Church of Santiago, Teotongo's subject" (Acuña, 1985: 38) (Fig. 5.1). According to scholars such as Rodríguez, there is no known corresponding structure under the name Church of

Santiago in the region (2014: 3). Although identified by the glosses as a small church, the drawing of the palm-roofed structure is comparatively large, as it fills the majority of what would have been the available negative space. Additionally, this structure and the three principal churches are roughly the same size. Assuming Córdova was referring to the building's physicality rather than prominence when he referred to the church as small, we may presume that the artist did not represent buildings in accordance with their actual, respective sizes.

The most remarkable point of interest produced by the representation of the Church of Santiago is its unique stylization (Acuña, 1985: 38). The image deviates from the logographic form utilized by the artist to render the remainder of the churches. In fact, there is no comparable structure painted on any of the maps in the Relaciones Geográficas collection. The artist depicted the Church of Santiago as he/she would paint a traditional style palace arranged in three parts around a central courtyard. Archaeologists have excavated many adobe brick domestic structures comparable to the illustration throughout Mexico. In the Pre-Columbian and into the colonial period, most commoners lived in small “walled compounds” with their related kin, while the elite lived in “patio groups” that were larger and contained a separate household (Smith, 1999: 147). According to Smith (1999: 147), the walls of indigenous patio group houses were built with double-row stoned foundations with adobe bricks on top; the floors were constructed using a packed method, lime-plaster or stone. Flat straw thatched roofs were refurbished periodically on many of these structures, as represented by the church of Santiago. Because the material of the walls, floors and roofs are largely ephemeral, excavations predominately uncover the building’s stone foundation as demonstrated by the site in Yautepec (Fig. 5.2) (Smith, 1999: 145).

Much of the information that we know of what traditional Aztec domestic architecture may have contemporaneously looked like is derived from paintings found in codices. The painter and scribe who depicted the palace of Moctezuma on this folio in the Codex Mendoza described the building and governance as highly organized by labeling each room by its purpose (Fig 5.3). The illustration includes the "Council Hall of War" on the left and the "Council Hall" on the right employed "for the hearing of legal cases and the passing of judgement," along the sides were rooms used to conduct the administration of the empire, and on the upper floor raised above the central courtyard were the residential chambers of the ruler and his nuclear household (Bleichmar, 2015: 690). Moctezuma's palace has a somewhat similar configuration as the Church of Santiago on the RGM with a three-part plan arranged around a courtyard. However, in contrast to the thatched roof represented on the RGM, Moctezuma's palace had a stoned roof as it was a grand dwelling reserved for the ruler. The artist painted the palace in a linear perspectival view while the RGM artist painted the Church of Santiago utilizing a flattened birds-eye-perspective, making it appear as an icon like the other churches, rather than an illusionistic representation. Although we cannot know for certain what the structure looked like in reality, since there is no record of it, it is significant that the artist depicted a traditional indigenous patio group household rather than a European style church. It perhaps suggests that the evangelistic colonialists had converted an existing structure into a church.

The artist drew the other four churches remarkably similarly as if checking off a list to ensure the inclusion of all the imagery iconographically necessary to depict a church. Their geometric structure and systematic configuration characterize the two-dimensional depictions. All of these churches consist of rectangular central points divided vertically into two or three sections. The rectangle on the left is the tallest, topped with a triangular roof and ornamented at

its peak with a cross fashioning a bell tower. Additionally, the images have arched doors on the right side and thin trapezoid foundations.

These similarities underscore the artist's training at an artist school that undoubtedly taught him/her the appropriate procedure to illustrate a structure of this kind. In this way, the churches are modeled like uniform blueprints that are read symbolically. Namely, the forms function as a representation of a church rather than reflecting the actual architecture of the structure they represent. The vast majority of the churches painted in the early colonial period were rendered in a similar fashion indicative of the fact that they were employed and understood as logographic expressions of a church. The churches on the Map of Atlatlauca & Suchiaca are similarly rendered two-dimensionally and composed analogously to the churches on the RGM with bell towers topped with crosses and a rectangular center (Fig. 5.4). Mundy claims the standard form originated from the "European prints that the native painters" studied in the monastic schools (2013: 7). I will examine the principal churches as they are related to the seated figures and existing edifices in the following subchapter.

Although reduced in scale, the smallest representation of a church on the RGM is fundamentally analogous to the principal churches with the exclusion of a few decorative details (Fig. 5.5). The artist excluded a few embellishing visuals, such as the cross on the door, and striped sphere beneath the cross, likely a result of the reduced scale. Furthermore, the glosses unrelated to the church, the big Misquiahuala place-name glyph, and the Tula river encircle the small church. Because the church does not have any naming glosses or kingly figures associated with it, its identity is difficult to determine. However, based on its location on the map, Rodríguez proposes the small church most likely denotes the church of Santa María Huilotepec

(2001: 4). Today there is not a church in the region by which the structure might refer to entitled Santa María Huilotepec.

The kings are rendered in profile and oriented to face the principal churches of the surrounding municipalities of Misquiahuala, Tezontepeque, and Atengo. These churches stand as representations of these large towns. Therefore, the kings that face these churches are likely their respective caciques (indigenous rulers) or the towns' principal lineage founders (Rodríguez, 2001: 3). Suspended above the headdresses are onomastic (relating to names) glyphs attached to each headdress. Onomastic glyphs like these were traditionally used as a naming convention for a ruler or founder. Nominal glyphs are clearly described in the Humboldt Fragment II as it lists the pictographic names of landowners by reducing the named people to human heads and onomastic glyphs (Fig. 5.6) (Mundy, 2015: 81). This pictorial list is translated with the help of transcriptions written on the left and evidence from the Codex Mendoza. Conversely, we are unable to translate or affiliate the onomastic glyphs on the RGM with a specific person predominantly because contemporaneous historical documents from this region are lacking as is systematic archaeological investigation in the immediate region of Misquiahuala.

The seated kingly figures are colorfully painted aside from the feet and hands of the figures. The figures' facial features are somewhat standardized, but the luxurious wardrobe signals their elite status and indicates that the artist chose to focus on costume and adornment rather than individualizing facial features. The map's artist was careful to present the figures conservatively, wearing richly bordered *tilmas* (cloaks) that tie at the shoulders and traditional *xiuhhuitzolli* (royal headgear), seated on a *tepotzoicipalli* or *icpalli* (jig-backed reed seat) (Mundy, 2015: 101). The *xiuhhuitzollis* share stylistic similarities such as their charcoal outline, translucent yellow coloration alluding to the physical crown's gold material and red ribbons, and

yellow feathers extending from the posterior as if elevated by the wind. The garment and seat represented by the artist function as additional support for the assertion that these figures represent indigenous rather than European leaders. As demonstrated in the Codex Osuna (fol. IV), European officials and friars were consistently presented wearing markedly dissimilar apparel and seated in a European-style chair (Fig. 5.7). In contrast, seated indigenous leaders were rendered sitting in an *icpalli* wearing the iconographic garments, as depicted on the RGM.

Moreover, I contend that the fact that these rulers are indigenous, rather than Spanish, alludes to the artist's autonomy and inclination to situate the indigenous community within the context of the changing political environment that defined the early-colonial period in New Spain. The artist of the RG Map of Cempoala similarly rendered a seated indigenous ruler facing a church (Fig. 5.8). Arguably, in all likelihood, the artists did not attend the same monastic school due to the surmountable distance between Misquiahuala and Cempoala (380 km), suggesting that the distinctive Aztec ruler-king pairing was not an artistic device only employed within the confines of the respective region. Alternatively, the similarity between the images indicates that the union was a conventional expression drawn with purpose and instilled with meaning. In this context, particularly the contextual framework set forth by Phillip II of Spain's *Relaciones Geográficas* questionnaire, symbolizing the leader as an indigenous ruler rather than a European colonialist posits a claim to power. For instance, if we assume the artist was aware of the crown's desire to ascertain confirmation of colonial authority, and aimed to appease the crown, he/she would have highlighted a European official in the prominent seat of political power. However, this does not necessarily imply that the artist was actively neglecting the crown's desire by portraying an indigenous figure as the politically ruling entity. Rather, it may indicate a more passive form of resistance, in which the artist felt the need to record the history

of the region, including the rulers that had presided over the territory prior to the conquest. At any rate, whether or not this indicates active resistance or merely the factual recording of indigenous history, the expression is pointed, and a reminder of the irresolute political structure that characterized the early colonial period.

The Rulers and Associated Churches

The following subchapter describes the distinguishing characteristics of the kingly figures and identifies the names of their associated churches. Although the identity of the rulers is unknown, their association with a principle church communicates their political position within the respective municipality. I have organized this subchapter in sequence from top ruler-church pairing to bottom (east to west).

The king in the highest register is rendered in profile facing the northern border and the largest church that the Spanish glosses designate as "the church of Misquiahuala" (Acuña, 1985: 28) (Fig. 5.9). The church of Misquiahuala still stands today, located in the central plaza of the modern-day town (Fig. 5.10) (Michael Hironymous, personal correspondence, 2019). As we can observe by comparison of the physical church and its logographic representation on the RGM, the artist did not attempt to distinguish the building by highlighting its architectural characteristics. For example, the actual church has two bell towers in contrast to the single tower depicted by the artist. However, the brick detail included in the image of the church of Misquiahuala distinguishes the building from the remainder of the principal churches. The artist ornamented the rectangular section that encompasses the door with a brick pattern. It may be that the brick pattern describes the physical architecture of the brick church of Misquiahuala, suggesting that the artist was familiar with the building's materiality (Fig. 5.11).

The ruler and the church of Misquiahuala are larger than the other two king-church pairings. Thereby the hierarchical arrangement and scale of the churches and kings emphasize the importance of the Misquiahuala municipality. Additionally, the artist painted the king's yellow *tilma* with a red border textured by charcoal lines. He is identified by the onomastic glyph of a *cuauhtzin* (eagle) head outlined by thin charcoal lines with a mustard yellow beak and painterly pink brushstrokes ornamenting the feathers. The *cuauhtzin* head is a standard glyph utilized to name a ruler. The prevalence of this symbol makes identifying the figure depicted unachievable.

Moreover, the figure's earlobes are elongated, a sign of piety and rulership in Mesoamerican society by alluding to the heavy disk earrings that would have stretched out his ears over time. “Sumptuary laws enforced by the Aztecs, declared that certain types of adornments” made from materials such as jade, gold and turquoise “were only allowed to be worn by select categories of people, making them visible metonyms for rank, standing, or personal achievement” (Finegold, 2019: 58). Andrew Finegold (2019), argues that not only did the material quality of the jewelry signaled the wearer’s elite status, but also the fleshy orifices made from the piercings carried social significance as it was related to “auto-sacrificial bloodletting and “rituals that accompanied coming-of-age ceremonies and accession rites” (55-57). Moreover, the “large holes made to accommodate the oversized ear flares” as evidenced through figural illustrations and engraved effigies “slowly stretched” the wearers earlobes and “served as permanent tokens of the potency flowing forth from the living body” (Finegold, 2019: 66). Thereby, despite the fact that the RGM artist did not paint earrings, the figure’s elongated earlobes convey their social status, as a complementary byproduct of a practice reserved only for the elite class.

The king painted below the figure associated with the church of Misquiahuala faces the southern border and the secondary church of Tezontepec (Acuña, 1985: 38) (Fig. 5.12). The church of Tezontepec still stands today, distinguished by its pink and white facade (Fig. 5.13). His *tilma* is predominantly red and framed by a yellow textured border. The onomastic glyph associated with this king depicts a human head that Rodriguez translates as *tzontecomatzin* with similar facial features to the kings with pink hair textured by vertical lines (Rodríguez, 2001: 4).

The king in the western hemisphere is rendered in profile, facing the southern border, and the principal church of "Santa María de Atengo" is the smallest figural description (Acuña, 1985: 38) (Fig. 5.14). The church of "Santa María de Atengo" is characterized by its single tower and yellow and brick facade (Fig. 5.15). The artist painted the *tilma* primarily light yellow with a dark red solid border. His garment is the most detailed of the trio with coupled lines crisscrossing to form a pattern similar to the netted-dotted pattern that appears on many of the hill-signs on the RGM. As discussed in Chapter Three, the netted-dotted pattern was frequently employed to illustrate the woven pattern of cloth or suggest the fabric is ornamented with precious stones as demonstrated in the *Florentine Codex* and the *Primeros Memoriales* (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2). The figure's headdress is the least elaborate of the figural trio. In contrast to the two headdresses that adorn the other figures, the artist only painted one feather protruding from the posterior of the crown and omitted the striated lines decorative lines.

In comparison to the *cuauhtzin* and *tzontecomatzin*, the glyph on the head of the most northern king is the most unusual onomastic device that labels a ruler on the RGM. Not only is the onomastic icon itself unparalleled and thus difficult to translate, but irregularity is also expressed in the compressed positioning. The artist overlaid the onomastic glyph on top of the headdress. Conventionally, artists typically paint Nahuatl pictorial naming-glyphs floating above

the figure's headdress, connected by a thin line as demonstrated on the other two kings and in the 16th-century *Boturini Codex* (Fig. 5.16). Nevertheless, it is not unprecedented for an artist to name figures using both floating glyphs and glyphs infused with headdresses on the same folio. For instance, in the depiction of the succession of Aztec rulers of Tenochtitlan in the *Primeros Memoriales,* one ruler is named by a serpent protruding from the headdress. In contrast, the other rulers are named by floating pictorials (Fig. 3.2) The nominal glyph adorning the king in the bottom register consists of a red and yellow circle with dizzying stripes surrounded by three small circles.

Although the onomastic glyph is obscure, Rodríguez argues that it is likely an illustration of a *chalchihuite*, meaning precious stone, especially a green or blue stone (Kellogg, 1995: 222; Rodríguez, 2001: 4). Although, *chalchihuite* typically refers to jade or turquoise, the yellow and red coloration may have represented to a different treasured precious stone or material, perhaps gold or a red ruby. Although jade was reputably the most valued stone by Pre-Columbian society, a variety of stones were rich in "religious, social, and political" symbolism (Berden, 1992: 292). Additionally, the convergence of Spanish and indigenous culture also incited the exchange and accumulation of notions of wealth and relative value as they pertain to luxuries in early-colonial society. The RG questionnaire explicitly requests information regarding where gold is produced and extracted. Evidently, Spain had a persistent reverence for gold in the Renaissance, especially within the context of their colonial New World regions in the 16th century. The underlying notions and high-desirability that the Spanish colonialists and evangelists associated with certain materials, such as gold, was undoubtedly transmitted to the indigenous population's perception of material. Hence, in the early colonial period a variety of precious materials were considered to have a significant eminence, suggesting that the

indigenous artist may have perceived any number of precious stones valuable enough, both economically and ideologically, to qualify it as an effective material to pictorially identify a kingly figure.

Alternatively, the coloration of the glyph is the same mustard yellow as the leaves on the trees that surround the border and the vegetal depictions within the largest hill-sign. On the basis of our perception of reality, we recognize that the yellow vegetal depictions allude to green. The same argument may be extended in this instance. By extending this thinking, I argue that although this glyph is primarily yellow, we can consider it as alluding to green, and thus the glyph perhaps correlates to a precious jade stone as proposed by Rodríguez (2001: 4). Respectively, just as the vegetation demonstrates the region as fertile, the underlying meaning that was associated with jade, "including fertility, centrality, and rulership, as well as a material embodiment of wind and the vitalizing breath soul" is alluded to by its pictorial representation (Taube, 2005: 24).

Moreover, Misquiahuala was and is today a relatively rural area that may not have had access to an extensive array of both New and Old World colorants applied to other RG pinturas. Aside from the river that I discussed in detail in chapter four, the colorants on the RGM entirely consists of yellow and red hues. The lack of a variety of colorants throughout the composition suggests that the RGM artist did not have access to a stable green colorant and thus resolved to paint these elements yellow.

Although the emblem is stylistically distinctive, *chalchihuite* is a common mnemonic pictorial utilized to identify an Aztec ruler. Like the other seated figures, due to the prevalence of this naming device, the precise identity of the *chalchihuite* king is indistinguishable. Appertaining to the kings' onomastic glyphs on the RGM, it is of particular interest that the

nominal glyphs utilized by the artist are remarkably indistinctive. The commonality of the icons, I contend, expresses that we may better understand the figures as symbols of leaders or founders, rather than specific living or ancestral individuals. Thereby, the seated rulers function as an animation of the principal towns that they are associated with by the particular provincial church the artist positioned them to face.

Estancias

The artist depicted estancias (ranches) graphically as red rectangles with an opening delineating the estate's entrance. All three of the glosses associated with the estancias indicate that they represent small livestock ranches. Córdova's inscriptions, paired with the estancias, specifically designate the owner by name and position. The gloss associated with the most northern estancia that parallels the eastern border asserts that it belongs to the clergyman priest named Juan de Cabrera (Acuña, 1985: 38) (Fig. 5.17). The gloss associated with the estancia beneath states that the ranch belongs to Martín Ceron (Acuña, 1985: 38) (Fig. 5.18). The glosses associated with the estancia depicted closest to the southeastern corner of the border identify Melchior de Contreras as the owner (Acuña, 1985: 38) (Fig. 5.19). The fact that Córdova identified the owner of these estates implies that perhaps the intended audience, the Spanish royal crown, might recognize the Spanish names tied to the estancias upon its remittance to Spain.

Moreover, the specific manner in which Córdova named the owner of the estancias conveys the concern of territorial claims in the region. During the early colonial period, provincial bureaucrats and imperial authorities predominately commissioned maps to assess the allocation of lands. Regardless of the motivation for the commission, maps were often imbued

with informative qualities regarding boundary and land claims. As demonstrated by the RGM, the primary objective that motivated the work's commission was to describe the resources, landscape, and report the status of colonial endeavors in the region. However, the depiction of the estancias and corresponding glosses specifying ownership function "as visual aids to assign land for agriculture and ranching" (Hidalgo, 2019: 1). Therefore, these declarations of ownership demonstrate not only the significance of the physical ranch it describes but also the importance of mapmaking as a tool to remodel and "adjust spatial boundaries in the New World" (Hidalgo, 2019: 2).

Similar logographic glyphs were also employed to identify urban plots and architectural plans. For instance, a map painted in 1567 illustrates property ownership by utilizing a remarkably similar shape and red pigment to elucidate a "two-room house" (Fig. 5.20) (Mundy, 2015:1 38). The shift in meaning expresses the volatility of pictorial representations, the context, and the cultural and political conditions under which indigenous artists made maps.

Conclusion

Throughout my detailed formal analysis of the churches, figures, and estancias I have offered many translations, identifications and interpretations of the imagery's iconographic meaning from the perspective of this anonymous indigenous painter. I have correlated my explanations to our knowledge of the pre-Hispanic past, especially in terms of their significance within their predisposed early colonial context. It is evident that the indigenous artist selectively integrated elements of European and indigenous traditions to vividly illustrate his changing world. The artist painted these elements in a precise manner, marking the ownership of land and symbolically representing the Spanish evangelistic endeavors as well as the collective memory of

the community's historiographic heritage. Additionally, the style and compositional arrangement of the politically charged imagery alludes to the artist's autonomy and endeavor to shape the narrative of the indigenous community in colonial society. Therefore, this discussion provides us a sense of the way in which the artist envisioned his/her environmental, cultural, and social setting.

Chapter Six:

Conclusion

Conclusion:

In this paper, I have argued that the *Relaciones Geográficas* map of Misquiahuala reflects aspects of the physical and ideological convergence that resulted from the Spanish colonization of Nahua homelands. As a historical record, it visually and materially embodies how the indigenous artist envisioned his/her community. It also visually acknowledges the conquest and the establishment of the civil and ecclesiastical institutions that were an integral part of the Spanish colonial enterprise. The indigenous community adopted some Spanish beliefs and some societal customs out of necessity. But they also preserved a significant amount of their own culture by integrating traditional ideological frameworks into the new and old artistic conventions that they employed on the manuscripts commissioned by the crown in the colonial period. Thereby, the indigenous artist exerts agency in shaping the visual narrative of colonial Misquiahuala by adapting indigenous iconography rather than succumbing to the imposition of Spanish culture.

What we see on the map is the deployment of a visual vocabulary that had developed over time out of the convergence of artistic practice in this particular community. I have aimed to

examine the RGM from a stylistic point of view and extend that discussion into possible implications of its compositional structure and elements. The RGM remains today as a snapshot of Misquiahuala at a particular moment in its colonial past. It is essentially a record of how someone conceived of this geographic space and constructed a particular vision of it for a distant patron.

In many ways, this analysis of the RGM map requires acceptance of the inherently fluid, diverse, and undefinable nature of the intercultural dialogue and exchange that occurred in Misquiahuala at this moment in its colonial past. As I have pointed out throughout my formal and visual analysis, a great extent of the RGM's imagery adhere to indigenous pictorial conventions. However, it is important to recognize that the notions of cultural continuity require careful consideration. In some cases, I have suggested that the artist's involvement of elements of Nahua iconography is a sign of resistance against the authoritative Spanish imperial system. It is impossible to determine whether the artist actively or passively preserved these traditional artistic conventions. Instead, it is likely a product of the much more complicated sociopolitical context of the artist.

Nevertheless, by virtue of the indigenous artist's role in constructing a particular worldview, all details on the map contain some degree of rhetorical significance. Thereby, it is evident that the indigenous artist who painted the pintura was an active participant in his/her own self-preservation. We cannot always definitively say what these details on the map signify. But regardless of the artist's intent, the disparity presented by the glosses on the map and the glyph it references remind us that the indigenous community and the Spanish colonialists were neither homogenous nor diametrically opposed groups in early-colonial society.

Through an informed interpretation of the map's imagery and by probing the map's painted surface, I have presented a multitude of possible underlying meanings. In many respects, my analysis of the RGM is an exercise in acknowledging uncertainties and asking certain questions. We will never know for certain what the artist wanted to convey about the region of Misquiahuala. Much of this paper remains in the hypothetical realm, leaving us with more questions than answers. Without any contemporaneous painted manuscripts from the region, we do risk inferring too much from the map itself. Therefore, I encourage debate on the possibilities and interpretations that I have presented in this paper. I hope this conversation about the RGM's historical, aesthetic, and cultural significance that has until now gone largely unexplored continues into the future, with more voices accumulating to propose a growing number of hypotheses.

Illustrations

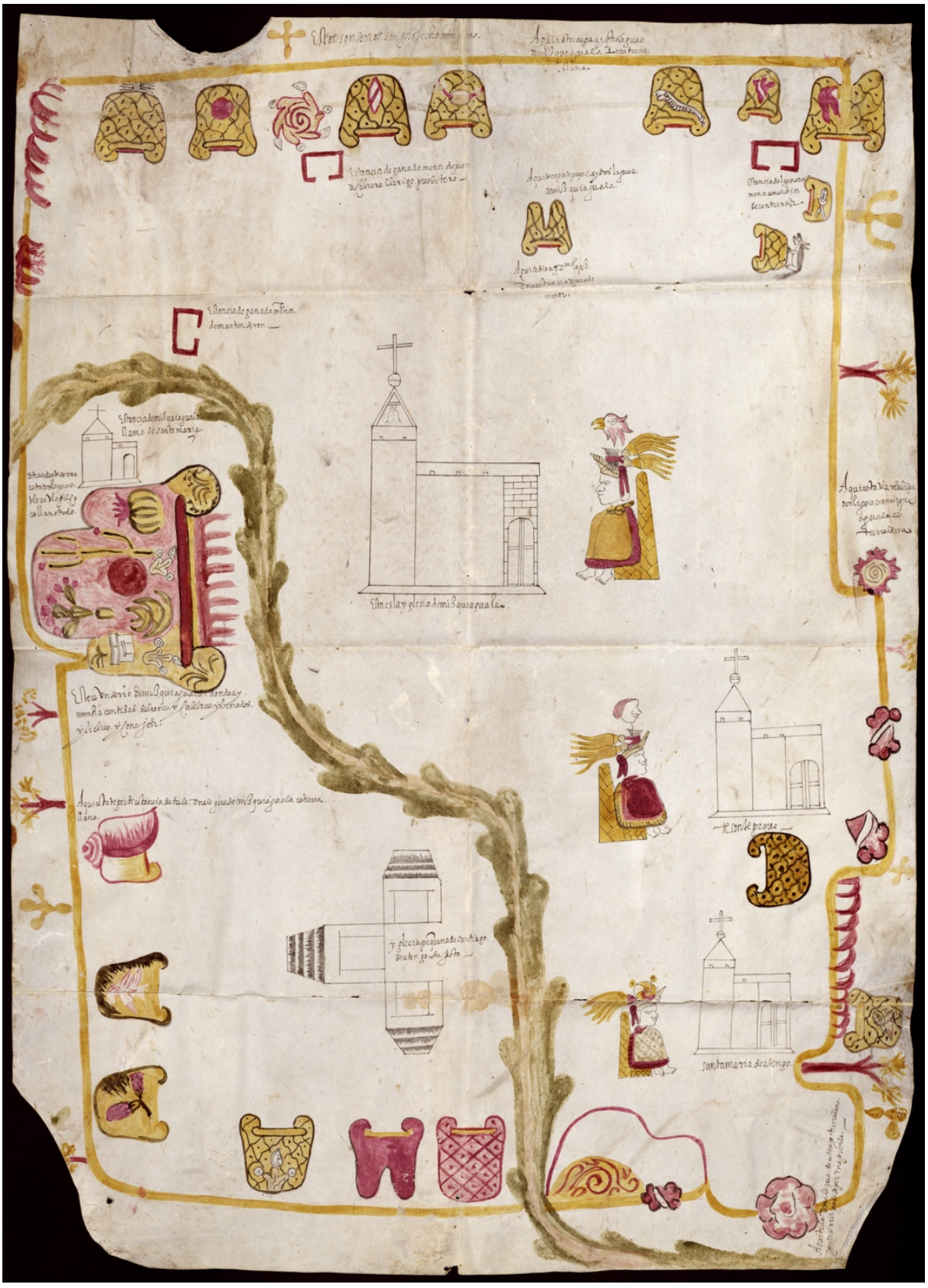


Figure 1.1

Unidentified. *Relaciones Geográficas map of Atengo & Misquiahuala (México)*. Paint on deer hide. 1579. 77 x 56 cm."Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579." *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.1

Unidentified, Detail of the river. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.2

Unidentified, Detail of the spring. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.3

Unidentified, Detail of vegitation. “Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.4

Unidentified, Detail of Misquiahuala hill-sign. “Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

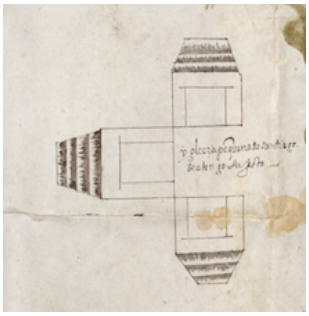


Figure 2.5

Unidentified, Detail of the small church of Santiago. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.6

Unidentified, Detail of the churches. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

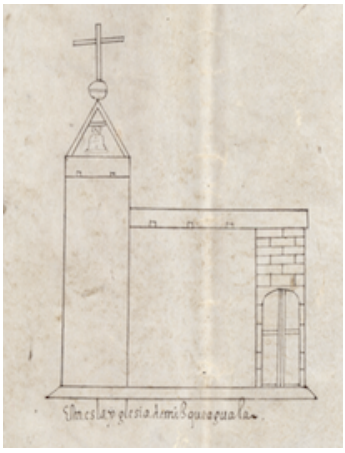


Figure 2.7

Unidentified, Detail of the church of Misquiahuala and the *cuauhtzin* (eagle) seated king. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.8

Unidentified, Detail of unidentified church. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 2.9

Unidentified, “Santiago Atitlán (Guatemala), 1585,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 27, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/3.

Figure 3.1

Bernardino, de Sahagún, 1499-1590. Florentine Codex: *General History of the Things of New Spain.* Santa Fe, N.M.: Salt Lake City, Utah *:The School of American Research*; University of Utah, 1970. (vol. 1 folio 114)

Figure 3.2

Bernardino, de Sahagún, 16th century. *Primeros Memoriales*. Folio depicting the succession of Aztec rulers of Tenochtitlan. The image is Fig. 8 in Felipe Solís Olguín. 2009. Family Histories: The Ancestors of Moctezuma II. In *Moctezuma: Aztec Ruler*, ed. Colin McEwan and Leonardo López Luján, pp. 25-39. London: The British Museum.

Figure 3.3

Coatlicue, c. 1500, Mexica (Aztec), found on the SE edge of the Plaza mayor/Zocalo in Mexico City, basalt, 257 cm high (National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City).

Figure 3.4

Unknown creator, Detail of the bottom register of Moteuczoma II and his children, Codex Cozcatzin, fol. 10bis-r, seventeenth century, Ms. Mexicain 41-45, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 3.5

Unidentified, Central Detail on Relación Geográficas map of Cempoala (México), 1580," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions.*

Figure 3.6

Unidentified, Detail showing the adhesive to glue European papers together on Relaciónes Geográficas map of Cempoala (México), 1580," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions.*

Figure 4.1

Saguaro Cactus. *arnegiea gigantea - (Cereus giganteus)*

Figure 4.2

Prickly Pear Cactus. Genus Opuntia.

Figure 4.3

Hironymous, Michael. Photograph of the River of Tula. (November, 13, 2019)

Figure 4.4

Unidentified, Relación Geográficas map of Acapistla (México), 1580," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions.*

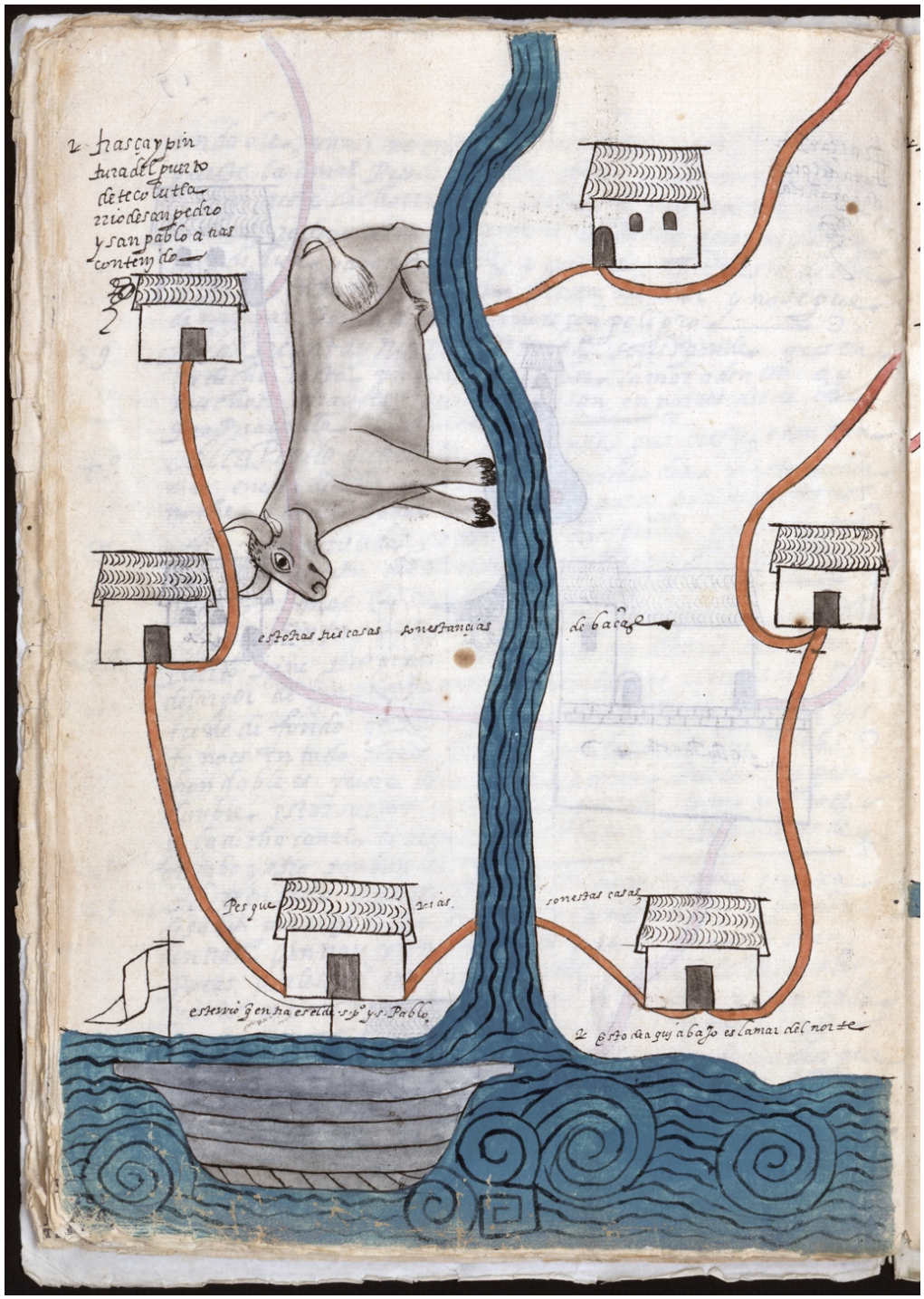


Figure 4.5

Unidentified, Relaciónes Geográficas map of Tecolutla (Tlaxcala), 1581," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions.*

Figure 4.6.

Hironymous, Michael. Photograph of Cerro del Elefante. (November 13, 2019)

Figure 4.7

Illustration with the glyph for Chapultepec, *Codex Telleriano-Remensis*, 16th century, folio 45v (Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Figure 4.8

Prosopis glandulosa

Figure 4.9

Prosopis pubescens

Figure 4.10

Prosopis juliflora

Table 7 *(continued)*

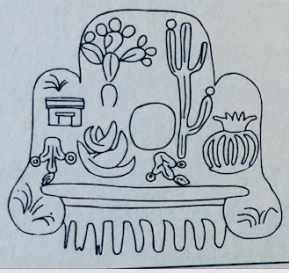
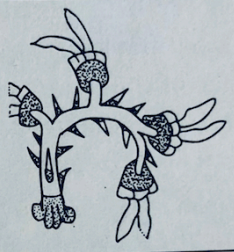
Place-Name and Nahuatl Etymology	Relación Logograph	Mendoza Logograph	Mendoza placement and explanation
Misquiahuala "place of mesquite circles" *mizquitl* = mesquite *yahualtic* = circular			Appears on fol. 27r as *"Myzquiyahuala."* The Mendoza version shows a bent mesquite bush, while the Relación shows a hill symbol enclosing a circle and various cactus and agave plants.

Figure 4.11

Mundy, Barbara E. Detail in reference to the altepetl Misquiahuala Chart of Codex Mendoza Tribute Roll. *The Mapping of New Spain: indigenous cartography and the maps of the relaciones geográficas*. University of Chicago Press, 1996. (page 141).

Figure 4.12

Screenshot from Google Street View. Depicts the native mesquite tree. Mixquiahuala, Hidalgo. January 10, 2020.

Figure 4.13

Prosopis glandulosa (bean pods)

Figure 4.14

Prosopis glandulosa (cross-section)

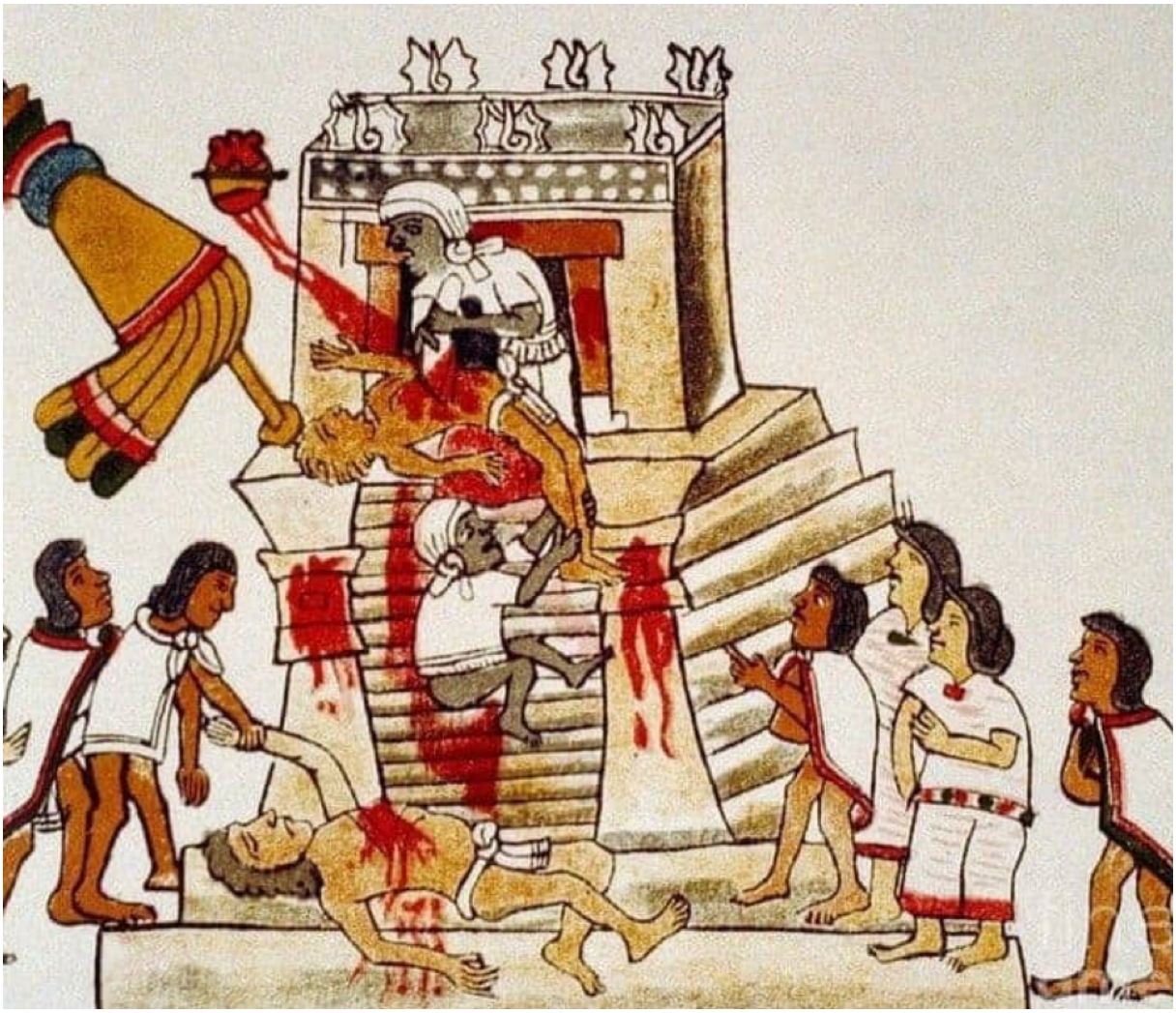


Figure 4.15

Unknown. Illustration of heart sacrificial ritual, Codex Mendoza. 1540. Bodleian Library at Oxford University.

Figure 4.16

Unknown. Olmec heart-shaped effigy vessel, 900-1200 BC, the oldest independently recognized image of a heart; demonstrating pulmonary artery, aorta, superior vena cava, interventricular succus and two ventricles. Photograph © Justin Kerr 1995 K6042 courtesy FAMSI 93-0055 [2].

Figure 4.17

Unknown. Photograph of Serpent iconography marking the Templo Mayor as Coatepec. (Tenochtitlan,) Mexico City, Mexico

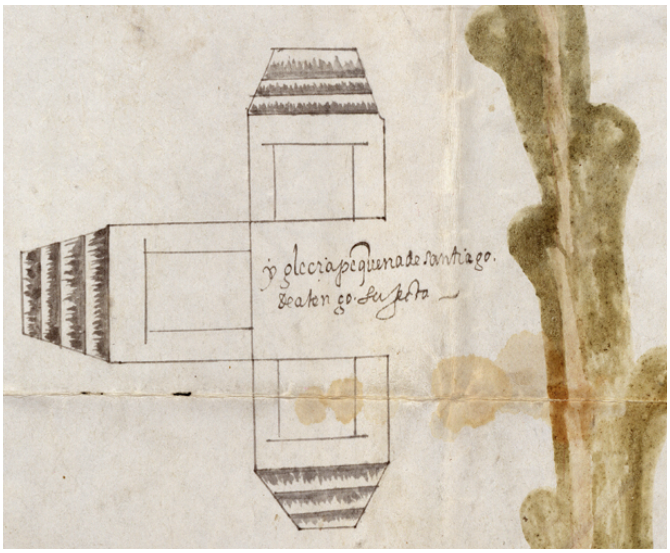


Figure 5.1

Unidentified, Detail of the small Church of Santiago. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 5.2

Smith, Michael, photo of ground-level houses, Structure 1 (top), 2 (right), and 3 (front), looking south. Yautepec, Mexico, 1999, (pg. 145)

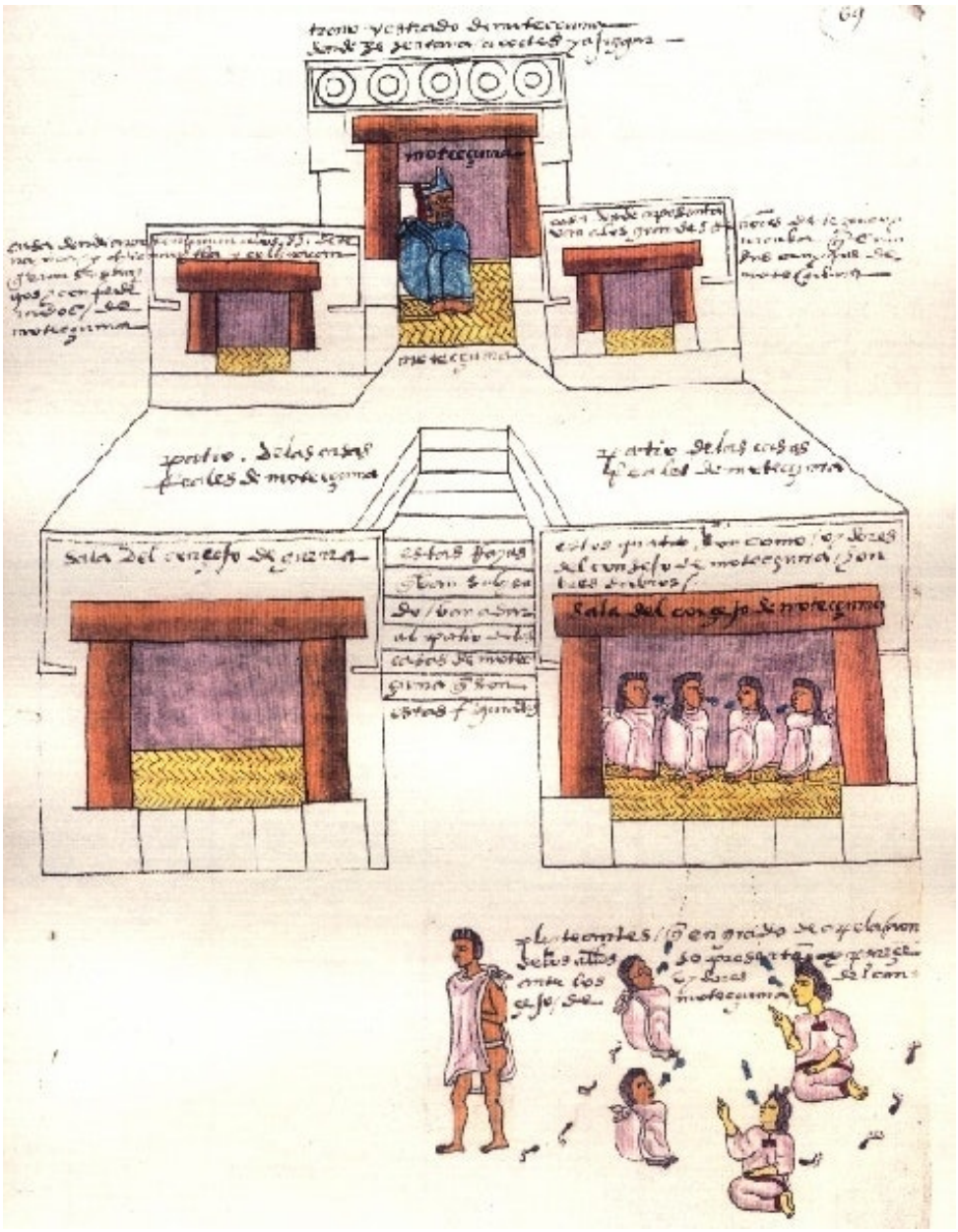


Figure 5.3

Unidentified, depicts the palace of Moctezuma, "Codex Mendoza," 1542. *The Public Domain Review*, publicdomainreview.org/collection/codex-mendoza-1542.

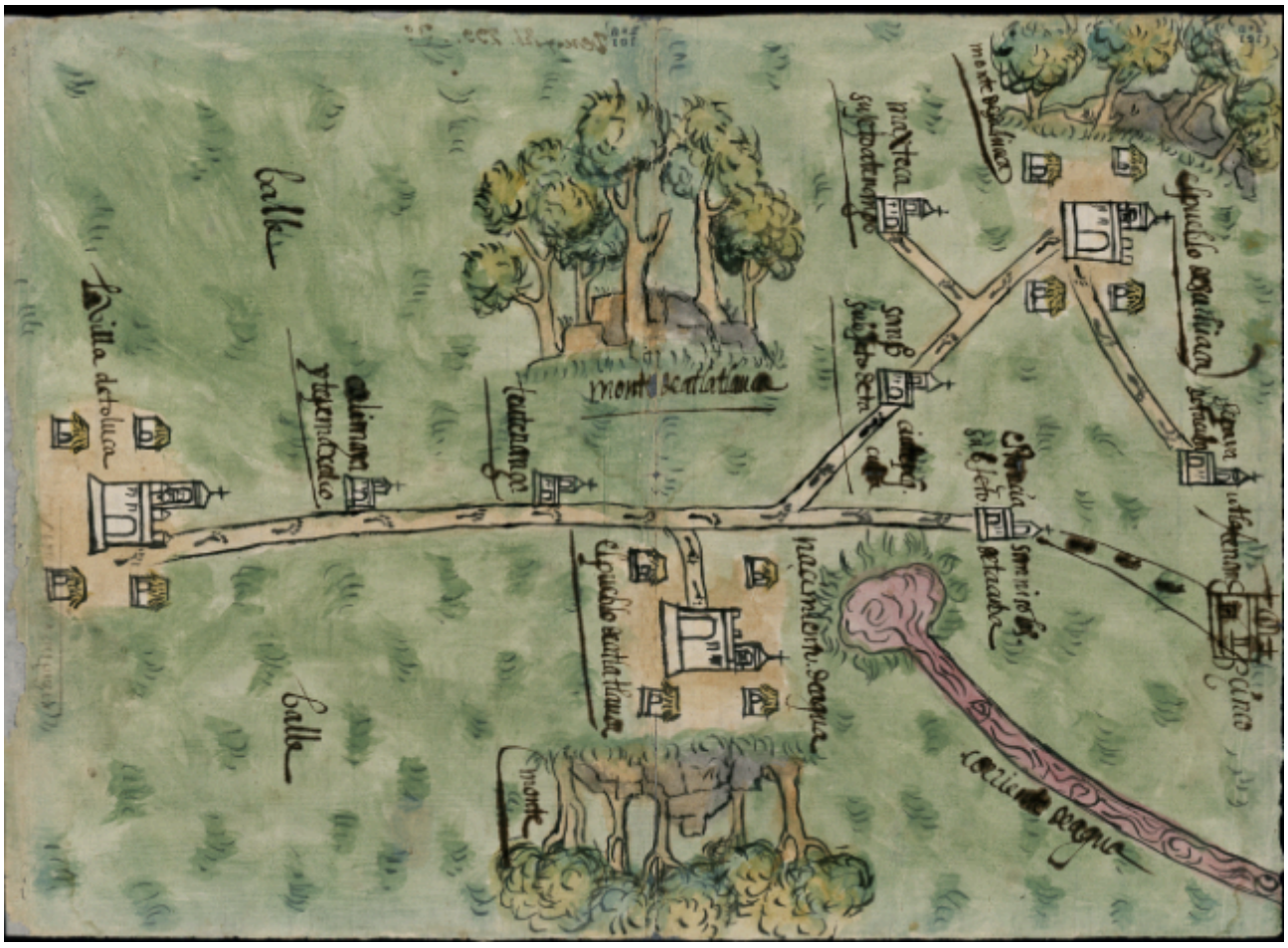


Figure 5.4

Unidentified, “Atlatlauca & Suchiaca (México), 1580,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/6.

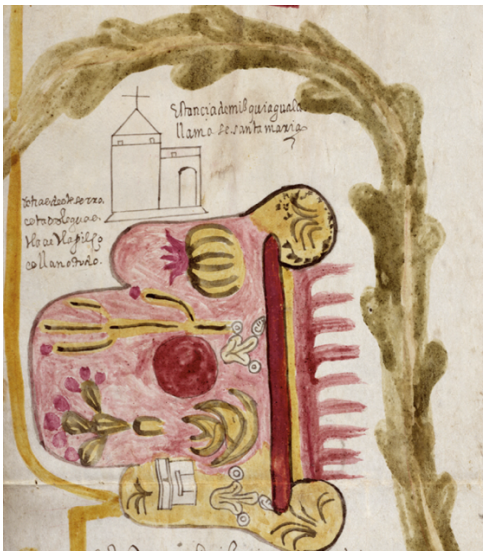


Figure 5.5

Unidentified, Detail of the small Church of Santa María Huilotepec. “Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

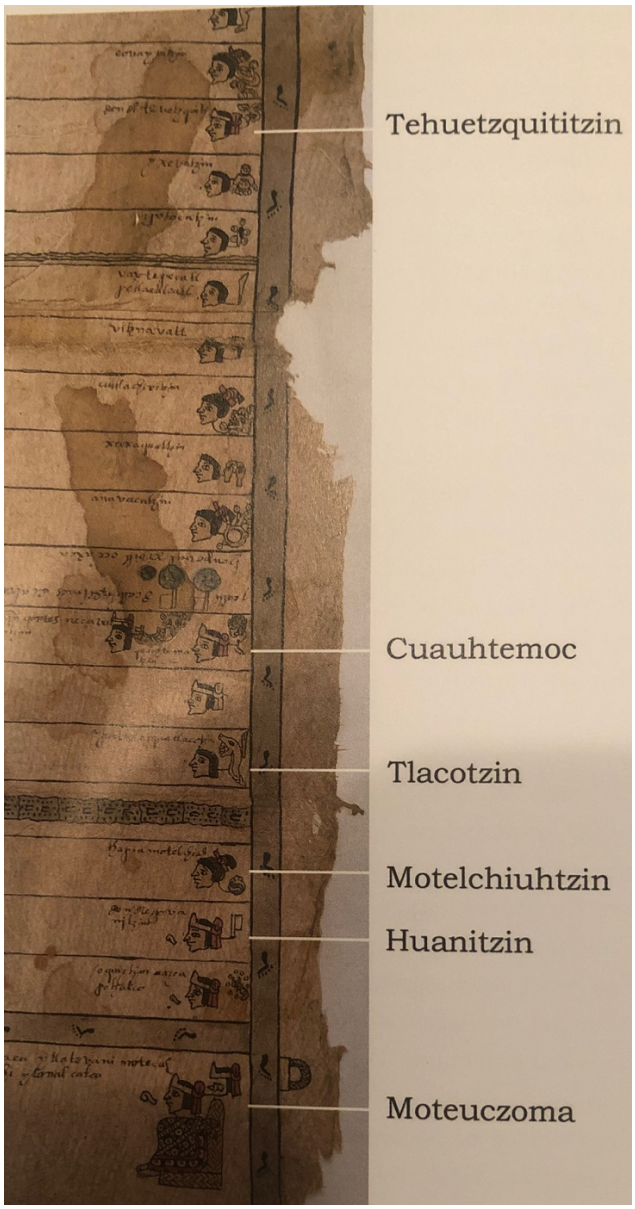


Figure 5.6

Unknown Creator, map of property held by Mexica elites, detail, Humboldt Fragment II, ca. 1565, Ms. Amer. 1, fol, 1. Staats-bibliothek zu Berlin/Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Stiftung PreuBischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Germany/ Art Resource, New York.

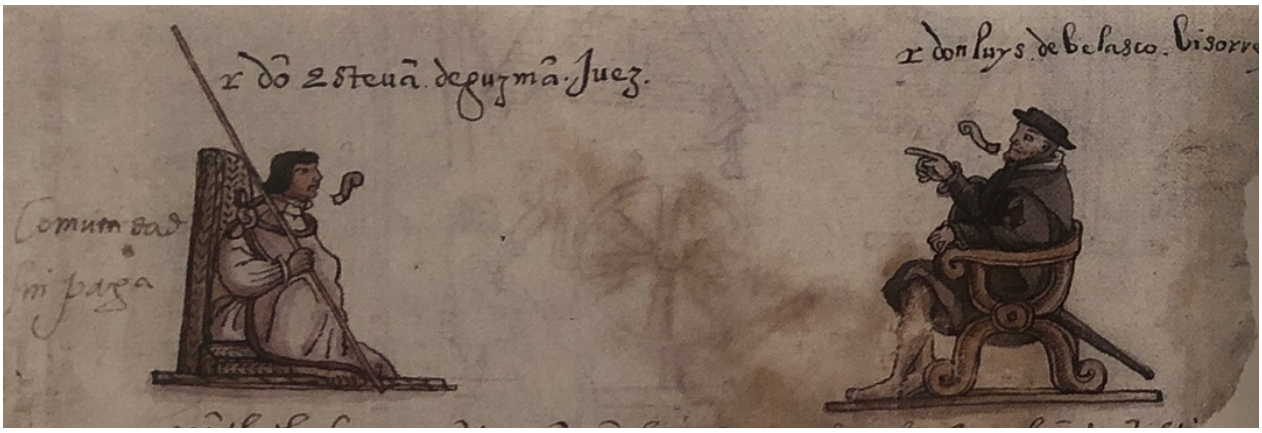


Figure 5.7

Unknown creator, the tecpan of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, with don Esteban de Guzman and Viceroy Luis de Velasco below, Codex Osuna, fol. 38r, ca. 1565. © Biblioteca Nacional de España.

Figure 5.8

Unidentified, Central Detail on Relación Geográficas map of Cempoala (México), 1580, *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*

Figure 5.9

Unidentified, Detail of the church of Misquiahuala and the *cuauhtzin* (eagle) seated king. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 5.10

Hironymous, Michael. Photograph of the Church of Misquiahuala. (November 13, 2019).

Figure 5.11

Hironymous, Michael. Photograph of the front door of the Church of Misquiahuala. (November 13, 2019).

Figure 5.12

Unidentified, Detail of the secondary church of Tezontepec and *tzontecomatzin* (human head) seated king. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 5.13

Hironymous, Michael. Photograph of the Church of Tezontepec. (November 13, 2019).

Figure 5.14

Unidentified, Detail of the secondary church of Santa María de Atengo and the *chalchihuite* (precious stone) seated king. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 5.15

Hironymous, Michael. Photograph of the Church of Santa María de Atengo. (November 13, 2019).

Figure 5.16

Unknown. Huitzilopochtli carried on the back of a person, *Boturini Codex,* ca. 1530-41, detail of folio 4. *Meseo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City.*

Figure 5.17

Unidentified, Detail of estancia owned by clergyman priest named Juan de Cabrera. "Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579," *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 5.18

Unidentified, Detail of estancia owned by Martín Ceron. “Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

Figure 5.19

Unidentified, Detail of estancia owned by Melchior de Contreras. “Atengo & Misquiahuala (México), 1579,” *University of Texas Libraries LLILAS/Benson Latin American Collection Exhibitions*, accessed April 17, 2020, https://utlibrariesbenson.omeka.net/items/show/5.

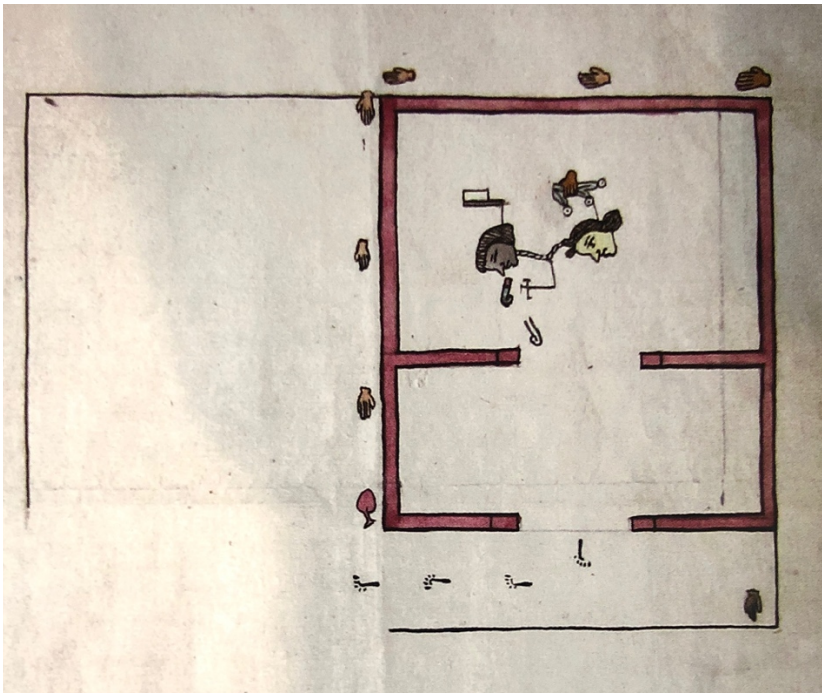


Figure 5.20

Unknown, map of the properties of Lázaro Pantecatl and Ana Tepi, ca. 1567. *Archivo General de la Nacíon, Mexico*, Tierras 20, pte. 1 exp. 3 fol. 256v. from Mundy (2015: 7.14)

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